

THE STONY BROOK PRESS

WOLFIE IS MY COPILOT

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Have Question, Will Travel

There are times when the calmest days may seem tempestuous, where the supposed inactivity of a serene setting brings forth a myriad of melancholy emotions. It is times like that during a lengthy break where boredom brings a new sense of unease. It is times like those that can make one question his/her life choices and lament over the future. For us in college, the

we are doing without knowing whether we would be happier doing something else, being somewhere else, or trying to become someone else?

Why are we doing a travel-themed issue?

There are magazines dedicated to just that one subject alone. They pay people to travel the world and rate hotels and eateries in far off lands. Some people have the

proposed question above, it is to be sitting in the same spot where you had spent most of your life and to surround yourself with the known.

Distance breeds clarity. To see and be among other people, and to see the differences and, especially, the similarities between you and them, is to defy that original question.

This issue is not to advocate travel. For many, it's either

YOUR LIFE AND YOUR HAPPINESS DEPEND ON SUCH A QUESTION, BUT WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE, IT IS A TERRIBLE QUESTION.

question is usually the same. "Am I doing what I want to be doing?"

It's a maddening question that lacks any straight answer. It breaks off into a whole host of other more personal queries. It's quite possibly the most necessary and unnecessary question for us as human beings. Your life and your happiness depend on such a question, but without the knowledge of the future, it is a terrible question. Up until their death beds, people still hold such a question. Can we ever be satisfied with what

damn reprehensible career of doing something that most humans can only dream of, and they get paid for it.

We don't get paid here at The Stony Brook Press. Most of our writers' travels come from family trips, school-sponsored treks or are personally paid or self-financed escapades. We don't get our room and board paid by some magazine but, in many circumstances, from our own pockets.

So why do a travel issue?

Because if there is one good way to lament over the

too expensive or too time consuming, especially for college students. But through reading the experiences of our writers, maybe somehow vicariously, we may obtain that clarity. When we share our problems and our hopes and dreams with each other, we may no longer have to ask such a question so often.

We hope you all have a great start to your semester.

Yours truly,
The Stony Brook Press

IT'S A TOUR STORY



JAMES GROTTOLA

I'll be the first to admit I'm not a very good musician, but from years of watching other people be, at the very least, okay musicians, I've made some friends who are good enough to take those talents on the road.

I spent two weeks over the summer heading to Boston, Buffalo, Philly and back with my friends in Sinai Vessel, a small DIY/indie band from South Carolina signed to Tiny Engines Records.

Whenever a friend of mine is able to take their band on the road, the first thing that I want to hear when they get back are the stories that they have. Weird shit always happens: I've heard tales of my friends being assaulted by men in green morphsuits in Pennsylvania and stories about kids in the South taunting other kids by, saying that they "heard they don't believe in God."

My stories aren't as wild, and I was definitely the most expendable member in the four-man minivan, but it was a great experience that I hope I can one-up one day with an even longer tour.

I had the pleasure of seeing

bands that genuinely blew me away musically every night, despite the relatively smaller crowds and draws; such is the life of a small DIY band doing a run away from their hometown. The Obsessives, a new two-piece now based out of Philadelphia, were great to see before their incredible new record dropped last year.

Along the way, I also had the pleasure of seeing Oso Oso, some friends from home that sound like Third Eye Blind in a mansion in Albany, Born Without Bones, a straight rock band, and Everything Ever, an incredible band from Staten Island I saw at an awful show in a basement in downtown Manhattan.

Alleys was a pleasure to watch on their home turf of western New York, and I was absolutely blown away by a band whose name is difficult to type but wonderful to listen to: Perspective, A Lovely Hand to Hold: Casper Elgin, although now no longer a band, was great to watch as well.

Bands aside, it were the events and places that made these two weeks so memorable to me.

So much happened in what felt like such a short time: a day trip to a lake

in Western Massachusetts had a little kid warning us about the dangers of leeches in the lake, a friend of mine from nearly two years prior had us play in the living room of his mansion, which featured an indoor basketball court, and some consumption of controlled substances took place on an abandoned golf court in Connecticut.

There are always bad things that happen, too: some nights we couldn't find anywhere to stay, and hotels are just too expensive. An early night of the tour took place at a warehouse in a fishing town south of Boston, and when the idea of staying at the actual venue was brought up, the seemingly psychotic owner gave me a stare and made some crude remarks to a friend of his, leading me to tell the group that I would rather sleep on a park bench than in that complex. To this day I'm convinced that these two kind of homeless dudes who told us we had to sleep on the wooden floor abundant with nails, rats and dust, would have killed me if we were there another moment.

Oddly enough, what stood out to me the most was not seeing Niagara Falls for the first time, or the pure joy



of getting \$20 worth of tips in a single night, a fortune for a guy selling merch on a tour like this, but seeing the Buffalo skyline from a beautiful, albeit illegal, viewpoint.

On our first day in Buffalo we were guided to an abandoned grain mill abundant with satanic graffiti, alcohol containers from teens who couldn't find anywhere else to go and living spaces of assumed squatters. It was easily one of the eeriest buildings I've ever been through in my life. After eventually making it to one of the roofs, past holes in the floor and rusting steps ready to detach at any minute, I saw a great view that was worth all the times I had feared for my life.

I also learned how to budget properly for the first time in my life as \$60, in addition to the tips I made

throughout the two weeks, was not a lot to sustain myself. I ate way more McDoubles than I'm proud of and couldn't spend money on anything I didn't absolutely need, yet I somehow managed to have a little bit of money left over at the end.

While it may have been a tour based around music, all traveling has to deal with the best local food places. On the nights that I could indulge myself, I ended up having the best hot dog of my entire life, experiencing the beauty of Buffalo's chicken wings and eating a pizza slice almost as big as my forearm.

I got lucky by ending up on this tour. I had enough experience from other tours and out-of-state traveling to play shows that I was able to make this one the longest and the best one that I did. A lot could have went wrong

and, as much as my parents despise whenever I leave the house for weeks at a time to travel a part of the country with people that they've never met, I understand the world experience and simple need to do something different and broaden my horizons is a key to making my life interesting.

I couldn't list everything cool that I did or it would just sound like droning after a while, but I can confidently say that a solid 80 percent of the time that I was away from home I felt like I was doing something cool and exciting despite the poor physical health I was in due to my god awful tour diet and poor hygiene.

I hope that next time my two weeks turn into a month and I can one-up all the stories that I have from this past July.





Dutch National Tulip Day

JOSEPH RYDER

Tijd voor tulpen! On January 16th thousands of Nederlanders celebrated the opening of the tulip season in Amsterdam during the national tulip day festivities. Over 10,000 fresh tulips were trucked into Dam Square in front the Royal Palace of Amsterdam and were arranged to represent this years theme of European togetherness.

"This is one of the largest events of the year for the Dutch," said John Van Velzen, a local who came out to join the festivities, "Today marks the opening of the tulip season which runs to around April."

People lined up from the late morning in preparation for the opening of Tulpenpluktuin, an event where people can freely pick tulips in the square.

At one in the afternoon local politicians officially commenced the day's festivities and thousands poured into the square to the beat of the Neuteblazers marching band.

Tourists and locals alike walked the rows of tulips to find the perfect flowers to pick.

"It's an amazing display of culture and community," said Elizabeth Padley, a London attorney on an anniversary trip with her husband, "we wanted to come and experience the beauty of these flowers."

Although now seen as synonymous with Holland, the tulip wasn't introduced to the Netherlands until the

**"TULIPS ARE
HOLLAND AND
HOLLAND IS
TULIPS"**

late 1500s. The flower is native to the mountains of Turkey and is resilient to cold weather.

In 1593 Carolus Clusius, a botanist and pharmacist planted the first tulips in Holland and the flowers immediately took to the the fertile Dutch soil and climate. At first tulips were rare to find in the Netherlands and the rich clam-

oured to get them and paid high prices for them.

In the early 17th century a single tulip bulb might cost 4,500 florins plus a horse and carriage. Tulips were so valuable banks used tulips as collateral for loans until a royal decree declared tulips as a product and not an investment. By the late 17th century tulip growing expanded and the prices dropped sharply.

Over the years tulips have been prominently displayed as a symbol for Holland in various types of artwork and celebrations around the Netherlands.

During the tail end of World War II the Dutch had to resort to eating tulip bulbs because the German's had stripped the land and people of almost all of the country's food after the Allies cut off German supply lines.

In the years following World War II the Kingdom of the Netherlands has become the leading exporter of tulips and most Dutch see tulips as part of their national identity.

Thys Schepers, a member of the Tulpenpluktuin organizing group put in simply, "Tulips are Holland and Holland is Tulips."

The theme for this year's tulip festival was European Unity. The tulips in Dam Square were arranged to display "EU 2016," in keeping to the theme.



Politicians (center, right) and the head of the event organization open the Tulpenpluktuin. LEFT: A teenage girl poses with a bundle of tulips that she just picked before the opening of the festival.

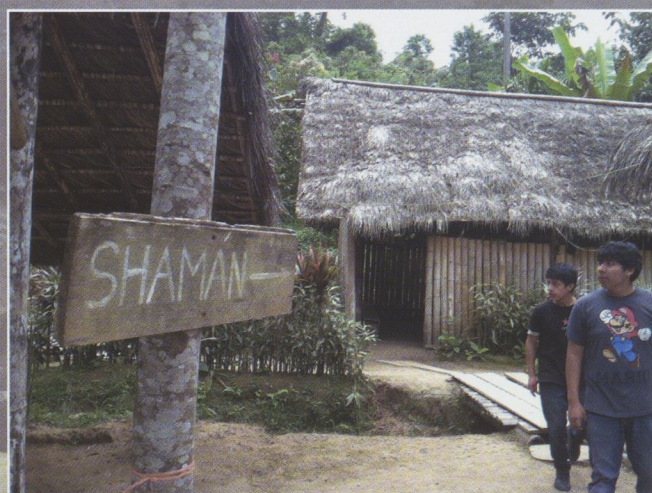


Tulips of all colors are arranged around Dam Square to kick off the Dutch tulips season which runs until April. RIGHT: The Neuteblazers band performs surrounded by over 10,000 tulips.





MEANWHILE IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD: ECUADOR



RONNY REYES

It's been well over a decade since I last stepped foot on my hometown's soil. From the peaceful suburbs of Long Island, I now find myself standing once again amid the middle of the world, the country named after the equator itself, Ecuador.

It's not quite the third world anymore as it now embraces things like smartphones, Wi-Fi and cable, but the roosters who serve as alarm clocks, the stray dogs who litter the streets in droves and the lack of warm water baths label Ecuador as a developing nation.

To be in a developing nation as someone spoiled by the first world's commodities, you can't help but feel annoyed at not having certain things like an ice-cold beverage at any given time. And you feel like an ass when you find out your presumptions were wrong and they do in fact have certain other things like the previously mentioned Wi-Fi routers.

The Vertical Roads

Ambato is a typical town in Ecuador east of the volcano Tungurahua, which the province is named after.

Whenever you step outside any house in this town, you'll most likely witness green pastures and mountains that never seem to stop extending upwards, disappearing into the clouds so that only on sunny days are you certain where the land ends and sky begins.

The roads and bridges here are now plentiful, and the streets are crowded with cars, all of them manual in order to accommodate the nearly vertical roads. There are now hidden traffic cameras, which have been the center of political debate for some time, forcing the drivers to slow down, occasionally.

But on these very roads you'll find dozens of stray dogs running about, pleading for food from the old men who are out on their morning walks.

Whether they're alive or dead, dogs are part of the Ecuadorian road.

These nicely paved roads can help you get to government buildings, local stores, gyms, amusement parks and even to the edge of a cliff, where tourists and natives alike take turns swinging on a makeshift swing set at the very edge. There are some trees a few feet below that will save you in case you fall.

A swing set like this is a trademark of the developing world, letting you know that no amount of iPhones nor HBO dramas can compare to the almost reckless recreations brought to life by native youths and thrill junkies.

"I heard about this from a couple of towns over and decided to check it out," said Christie Gardner, a tourist who was on her way to Quito, Ecuador's capital. "It feels like you're a baby bird about to take off from the nest."

The Orient

The world has had a fascination with the label "Oriental" for hundreds of years, and the Orient exists in Ecuador as well. Just eastward of Tungurahua—driving up, down and through mountains—you'll find the Orient. This is a place where the heat resembles that of the American-southwest and where monkeys tend to take your nice things. It's a land in tune with its indigenous people and where bars and clubs open all night, serving all types of drinks and entertainment.

In this Orient, it's difficult to make out where forest ends and house begins as home and nature blend effortlessly in a way that makes an entire pasture look like someone's backyard. Fences are almost nonexistent in most homes, and residents even purchase riverside properties as weekend getaways, building makeshift dams that make it safe for children to play in the river without being swept away by the current.

Indigenous people are easily found in the Orient. Their contact with the

modern world comes whenever they give tours, allow outsiders to visit their shaman and when they mine and scavenge the river for gold and precious minerals.

Nowadays, the indigenous people have one more reason to make contact with the modern world. They prepare for their yearly protests against the government that is pushing its way into their land and customs, and these protests have begun to sync up with that of those protesting the government's new taxes on inheritance.

"These reforms are making [the indigenous people] mad, and now the rest are mad because inheritances are important and not a cent should be taken from you," explained Elvia Salazar, an Ecuadorian who moved to the U.S. and was visiting her family in the Orient.

The Middle of the World

In Quito, you can go to the Ciudad Mitad del Mundo (City Middle of the World) and stand with one foot on the northern hemisphere and the other foot on the southern hemisphere. Al-

though there are some disagreements with the exact pinpoint of the Earth's center, many people come here to perform a certain feat: Here you can balance an egg on top of a nail.

At the heart of the capital, nearly every square-inch of Quito is protected by historical preservationists who seek to keep the city's rich history untouched by the modern world.

With its cobblestone roads, tall brick buildings and massive cathedrals, Quito resembles that of an old European town untouched by time. The only signs of modernity are phones in everyone's hands, the trolley that divides the town in two and the chalk-based graffiti depicting heroes and revolutionaries of the city's past.

Here the past and the future are always at odds, and that is what it means to be part of the developing world. It's an industrializing nation trying to find a way to balance its customs and culture with the new demands of modernization and first world commodities.





A SUMMER AT THE **TURKANA BASIN INSTITUTE**

TAYLOR KNOEDL WITH PHOTOS BY DEMING YANG

In the most ancient wastes in their modern facilities, for over sixty years the Leakey's et al have been the (arguably) lead in human origins research. Richard Leakey, a faculty member of Stony Brook University along with his colleagues established the Turkana Basin Institute and began its Origins Field School for undergraduate students in 2011.

Of course, only a group of wayward undergrads the field school does not make. That's what I sought--as one of the waywardest of the undergrads at the field school. I sought to know the archeological origins of humans that surrounded that facility.

Eleven of us set out from John F. Kennedy Airport, then we met two more voyagers in Nairobi, Kenya; Linda Martins, director of the field school and geologist; and Abel Ang, Singaporean well-read to-be disillusioned post-undergraduate student. It was late, the air smelt a little less like America and the unfamiliarity of it all brought an anxious edge to the surroundings--though not a dreaded edge, just a sense of caution that was yet subdued by the ambition of visiting this new land. That following morning we flew out to Laikipia, a savannah region. Here was the Mpala research facility led by Dr. Dino Martins--the "Dudu Man of East Africa," an entomologist of some prestige. After the longest nine days of the trip, during the ecology module--a period deliberately made to allow us *mzungus* (Swahili for "foreigner" which directly translates to "white person") adjust to the culture and climate of Kenya. Afterwards, we would fly North to Turkana.

"Turkana is too hot," Rafael, one of the guards of the Mpala river camp would say on a relatively warm Laikipia day, "the weather here is perfect," he

added. It was a crisp morning, about 55 degrees Fahrenheit. Myself, Rafael and two homeboys sat around a fire in a depressed stone hearth-pit during a "fitness circle"--a healthy way to handle the chill of the crispy Laikipia mornings.

But soon it was too hot for fitness circles. At the Ileret campus on Eastern Lake Turkana, we made our truest home of these eleven weeks. If you're me, at least, I rise at 6 a.m. and drag my feet downhill to the mess hall. Here it's still dark, and twilight isn't coming for another twenty minutes. I pack a torch and a malarone (an antimalarial). With a crispy mouth and frail stomach, I hesitantly prepare tea and take the dawn's first water.

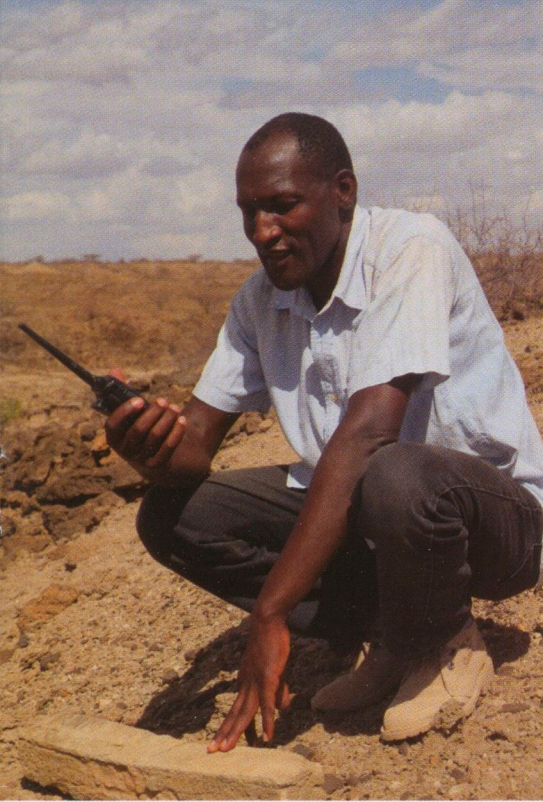
The morning time is chill and I haven't showered yet. Water in this hour is perceived as abrasive in a pleasant temperature (whereas the air temperature is actually abrasive--the

water, pleasant). Ideally, one washes after peeling off their sticky field-wear that they've caked with sweat over a long day. It's best done in high noon, as you could always walk out from shelter and catch some slow-but-blasting heat to bolster the allure of standing below temperate water showers. After breakfast I poop. That is, without fail.

At least for the first five weeks... you're dehydrated. In Turkana, it's high nineties to low hundreds on the regular. And the lack of a GMO diet gets to you in a way. But we humans are hardy and adjust as we have been for 2.8 million years (only referring to the genus *Homo* as to avoid debate). You adjust and you perceive while you adjust. The field school exposes you to a wide and diverse array of people and I'm not referring to only my peers.

Dr. Jason Lewis, research assistant professor with TBI and SBU as well as





the facility. He suggests that this could be due to the long-term existence of Koobi Fora.

Whereas the west side had no preexisting history of such an institute, its early conception was met with much probing and resistance from the local Turkana. The Turkana people face many economic and environmental challenges. Passing from the TBI airstrip to the Turkwel campus, there is a tight cluster of settlements and highly consumed vegetation. Pastoralism is key to the local economy, and in this thick population density, overgrazing is a consistent problem. In the past five years, the discovery of petroleum deposits in the area provided short-lived jobs and an ultimate distrust towards any foreign presence. "TBI came wrapped up in what they were perceiving as an influx of foreign operations that were aimed at removing some kind of resource," Dr. Lewis said of the locals, which was challenging for TBI but it also "indicates awareness of issues of foreigners taking their resources."

TBI further accommodates the region it is situated in by contributing to infrastructure among other social works. With communities right outside their gates, TBI provides access to clean water, they put hundreds of children through school, and offer stable career opportunities. Dr. Lewis points out that this is very clearly a result of pressure from the community. "Not in a violent way, but in a very strong dialogue."

Paleoanthropology is attractive to mzungus. It's a bold field to enter, but Turkana is among the richest land to pursue this sort of work. All you have to do is get there. Undergraduates of

the field school who are ambitious enough may enter these ranks.

Pamela Akuku, a Kenyan native and junior researcher of the Archaeology Department at the National Museums of Kenya attends the field school on scholarship and the insistence of her superiors at the museum. Pamela graduated from the University of Nairobi with a BA in paleoanthropology. She was one of a class of twenty-four for anthropology majors, and the only one who studied paleoanthropology. She indicates that economic security is the reason why her graduating class was so small despite Kenya's rich fossil and artifact sites. Pamela points out on the shortage of Kenyans working in this field that, "it's harder for Kenyan students to get into this field without help from the museum. It seems most foreigners are the ones doing this work, so Kenyans see it as, you know, 'crazy mzungos do your thing.'"

Field Manager, Nyete Cyprian, or to those who have the pleasure of knowing him personally; Daktari Nyete, attests to the lack of Kenyans in this field. Nyete, who dropped out of the University of Nairobi after a year while studying for a degree in archaeology, has worked with the Leakey family for about 15 years. Nyete points out that very few are interested in working in the fields of paleoanthropology and archaeology as it isn't economically stable, "the government doesn't support researchers to work on these sites." He also adds that the necessity to work in the harsh climate of the Turkana desert deters Kenyans. "It's not hard, but challenging," he describes the work. At the end of our interview, Nyete expresses his interest in returning to school--where pursuing a degree in archaeology may not be so difficult when considering his talent in the field.

The work done at the Turkana Basin Institute isn't solely that of paleoanthropology. It is that of the wellbeing for many people, it is a daring effort to live off the grid using modest means of energy production. It is a place at risk. Dr. Lewis discusses the issue of the dam being built on the Omo river, which feeds into the basin from Ethiopia. This dam is likely to cause an environmental catastrophe, as the Omo is the primary source of water entering this region. Interesting times are upon the basin--the same interesting times around the world. At the very least, it is an interesting and productive way to spend eleven weeks.

one of the directors of the Origins Field School describes to me the origins of the Origins Field School--how TBI came to be a facility for students and researchers to work in this fossil and artifact-rich region.

"The first major expedition in Turkana during the classic era of paleontology was led by Richard Leakey on the east side [of Lake Turkana] in a place called Koobi Fora," which is about a four hours lorry drive South from the breezy veranda at the Ileret campus where we sat.

Though, not overly familiar with the east side of Turkana as Dr. Lewis primarily works from the West side at Turkana, he has noticed no friction between the outlying community and





activeminds



MICHELLE TOUSSAINT

In a unanimous decision, Stony Brook's Undergraduate Student Government approved funding for Active Minds, a nonprofit mental health advocacy organization, for the spring 2016 semester.

Active Minds was established in 2003 as "the voice of young adult mental health advocacy nationwide." Alison Malmon, then a junior at the University of Pennsylvania, created the program in 2000 after experiencing a life-altering tragedy. In a CBS Cares campaign, which is a public service announcement dedicated to addressing a range of health issues, Malmon speaks of her brother Brian, whom she describes as her best friend.

"He went to college and struggled with depression. He felt alone," Malmon said. She spoke about how her brother kept his emotions from everyone. He felt like everything he was going through was caused by his own actions and, because of this, no one would understand. After three years of experiencing this, Brian did finally share his struggles with Malmon and she admitted, "I didn't know what to do."

A few months later, Brian took his own life.

Malmon realized that many college students shared some of the same experiences as Brian, but mental health wasn't something that was commonly discussed. After coming to this realization, she committed herself to changing campus culture in regards to speaking openly about issues that affect many within the campus community. The most important thing was giving students and faculty the training necessary to answer the question: What will you say when someone with depression comes to you?

Today the organization has more than 400 chapters with Stony Brook now joining the effort to educate, encourage and form a bridge between the students and the mental health community.

Stony Brook currently offers Counseling and Psychological Services to students and faculty. This includes consultation, medication management and crisis intervention. However, according to Stony Brook's Active Minds President, Emilia Leon, CAPS Director Julian Pessier is "very supportive" of the organization's presence on campus. She stated that they were even gifted a banner with the Active Minds logo to display at events.

The organization has received a lot

of other support too. After presenting themselves to USC, Leon, who is also a CHILL Peer Health Educator and Resident Assistant, along with Madiha Saeed, another member of the organization, received a standing ovation from every person in attendance.

"I wanted them to be aware of what we were doing, and USC has been amazing in supporting us. I'm very thankful," Leon said.

When asked about the organization's mission on campus, Leon spoke about her plans for the spring semester. "I want to focus on awareness. The reason for meeting with the USC is so we could receive funding so that we won't have to focus on fundraising. We want to create an environment in this school where people who are stressed out or suffering from mental illness aren't afraid to go talk to somebody. We want them to know that it's okay to receive help."

Leon has experienced first-hand what it's like to be completely overwhelmed to the point of becoming depressed. As a Resident Assistant, fellow students often confide in her about the constant struggles they're facing.

"We're in a very competitive school; a great school. The downside is that everyone's always on edge. We get stressed out, we get anxious and we may get depressed. I see that with my friends. I see that with my residents and people around me. I see that with myself sometimes."

She described how by going into the library and just looking around, you could see this in almost everyone. She became overwhelmed. "I was like, more needs to be done."

Active Minds will work towards educating and destigmatizing mental health problems campus-wide. It will offer awareness programs, such as photo-shoots dedicated to promoting self-love and positive body image, covering the pavement around campus with positive quotes and mental health facts using chalk, panel discussions involving campus professionals providing information and resources dedicated to dealing with mental health in the best ways possible. This includes social anxiety, abnormal child psychology and even cultural barriers.

With her family being from Ecuador, Leon spoke about how sometimes not being able or not wanting to speak about mental illness is because of cultural pressures to keep such things hidden. "My culture is all about silence. We don't talk about these things. Peo-

ple are afraid that it will make them look weak. They're afraid of what other people are going to think of them and that causes more stress. That's what makes you feel ashamed of your mental health."

This played a big part in inspiring Leon to join Active Minds. People have told her about their fears of being judged or having people thinking they're "crazy," but she wants people to know that there's nothing wrong with going to talk to someone. She explains how the first step to healing mental illness is talking about it. This is why the organization also offers people the training to help others that need it.

"The worst thing you can say to them is 'It's fine. Don't worry about it.' It's all about empathy," Leon said. A lesson that the organization wants people to know is to never question the reasons or circumstances behind the person's emotions. Just be there for them.

"We're not going to be perfect all the time. Even if here [SBU] you see a person with a 4.0 GPA and joining all these clubs, you never know what that person is going through. On the surface they might seem like they're doing good, but you don't know what's going on behind closed doors," Leon explained. You don't know the whole story. When people close that door, they hide all that. That makes it worse. That's what causes suicide."

This is, unfortunately, a reality that Stony Brook is familiar with. Between 2014-2015, two students took their own lives on the university's campus. One sought counseling for depression but had not received the quality treatment needed to prevent such a terrible outcome, according to a lawsuit filed against the university by the student's parents in Long Island Federal Court.

With Active Minds now on campus with plans to collaborate with CAPS, USC, as well as other clubs, it could have a significant impact on how the campus community views and addresses mental health and safety.

"I want it to touch more people. My goal is to make it something everyone knows about," Leon said. She added that even if people don't want to get involved in events, she wants them to become more educated on how to deal with their own mental health and how to help others. "Just be there for that person. Just say, 'Let me help you get through this.' It's ok not to be ok."

"Sometimes that's the only thing you need to say. It's like a chain reaction. It'll spread."

THE STONY BROOK PRESS TRAVEL ISSUE PRESENTS:

PARIS

LOUISE BADOCHÉ

It always feels so good to go home, back to Paris. The city of lights, the city of love; the city I grew up in.

There is something so special and invigorating about coming back. Almost four years ago, I left home to go study in the U.S. and live the American Dream, as people say. Since then the word "home" has taken a whole new sense for me. Home. And saying it out loud is like mentioning a guilty pleasure, something I can only have twice a year.

Coming back home is of course synonymous with the indisputable pleasure of seeing family and friends. But it also means rediscovering Paris, its charm and its language.

Coming back home means wandering in the old Paris of the Latin district, crossing the river and enjoying the view of the back of Notre Dame; it means strolling in the historic Marais where buildings haven't changed since medieval times, smelling the odor of falafel in Rue des Rosiers, stopping to get a bite at L'As du Falafel and finding an eccentric leather jacket in a second-hand clothing store for dessert.

Coming back to Paris means going out Rue Oberkampf and navigating from bar to bar; it means walking down the steep and narrow streets of Montmartre. It means drinking wine, eating bread, cheese, croissants, pains au chocolat (chocolate croissants) and having coffee under the sun on terrace.

Coming back to Paris means walking on the banks of the Seine where groups of friends and couples meet to savor a sweet moment. Coming back to Paris means being amazed over and over,

like any visitor, by the density and the simplicity of the metro system.

But this year coming back Home also means coming back to a city that has recently suffered from unexplainable atrocities and observing changes. After the attacks, posters of the coat of arms of Paris on which is written *Fluctuat Nec Mergitur*, "tossed but not sunk" in Latin, have been put in the metro and in the streets. French flags flutter outside of windows since President François Hollande called on the population to do so as a sign of resistance. In large stores your bag is constantly being checked. Military soldiers, in numbers I had never seen here before, patrol in the streets, in train stations, in museums, etc. Everyone is on alert. Every day, somewhere in Paris, the metro is being stopped and evacuated because of suspicious, abandoned packages. Firefighter sirens are being heard much more often than they used to.

I haven't been back on any site of the attacks, but I heard people still come with flowers. I have heard additional stories about the night of Nov. 13. Some are tragic, of course, but some extremely beautiful and revealing the best aspect of human kind: solidarity, love and kindness toward one another.

It is certain: The attacks have affected the city and will remain in everyone's hearts forever. But Paris remains this beautiful city in which people live, are happy, go out, go to the movies, to concerts, to restaurants and walk at night under the stars. Paris remains the beautiful city it will always be: the city of lights, the city of love; the city I grew up in. Home.





A NEW GENERATION DISCOVERS VINYL

KEVIN URGILES

Peter Jasko sifts through a crate of records inside of Stony Brook University's tight-spaced vinyl library as a dusty record player in the corner of the room begins to spin a disc that is colored with a hallucinogenic blend of yellow, green and purple.

An occasional scratch occasionally interrupts the smooth flow of cosmic sound emanating from the record's grooves, but Jasko--a 20-year-old vinyl collector--does not mind because he did not buy the record for its audio quality. He was simply fascinated by the idea of being able to hold his music.

"Most people my age who are buying records aren't concerned about the sound quality they're getting," Jasko said. "They keep buying records because there's just something romantic about having a physical copy of music and then watching it play at the drop of a needle."

Today, many bands are trying to press vinyl records for a growing market, but there are approximately 20 operating pressing plants in the United States, Noisey reports. Most prefer working with bigger record labels that can afford ordering records in bulk rather than smaller independent labels or artists because it is better business, Mike Park, owner of Asian Man Records, said.

The resurgence of vinyl culture among younger people, like Jasko, was a surprise to many in the music industry. As CDs began replacing vinyl, analog infrastructure was dismantled. This left the pressing plants and other aspects of vinyl production saturated with a staggering amount of work, Alex Abrash, an audio engineer who has been in the music industry for over 15 years, said.

Today, many bands are trying to press vinyl records for a growing market, but there are approximately 20 operating pressing plants in the United States, Noisey reports. Most prefer working with bigger record labels that can afford ordering records in bulk rather than smaller independent labels or artists because it is better business, Mike Park, owner of Asian Man Records, said.

"Even if a plant says there's no favorites, I call bullshit," said Park. "There's no way they're gonna give us even treatment for a 500 piece order versus a 100,000 piece Justin Bieber order."

Increase in vinyl sales is not enough to convince those in the music industry to invest in new analog equipment, Abrash said.

"Nobody is going to make these machines again because the format still only accounts for a small percent of music sales overall," Abrash said. "So now these small labels are in trouble because there is so much demand but the structure of the record business can't handle it."

According to the Nielsen SoundScan, 9.2 million vinyl records were sold in 2014, up 52 percent from 2013. That same year, 18 to 24-year-olds bought 5 percent more vinyl than customers who fell in the age range of 25-34 and 9 percent more than 35 to 44-year-olds, MusicNews reported.

The increase of vinyl being produced by large record labels for mainstream pop artists is one of the factors that has led to an increase in sales among young people, Joseph Ostermeier, owner of Infinity Records in Massapequa, Long Island said. This younger generation picks up the slack for an older age group that has shifted toward more

expensive collections.

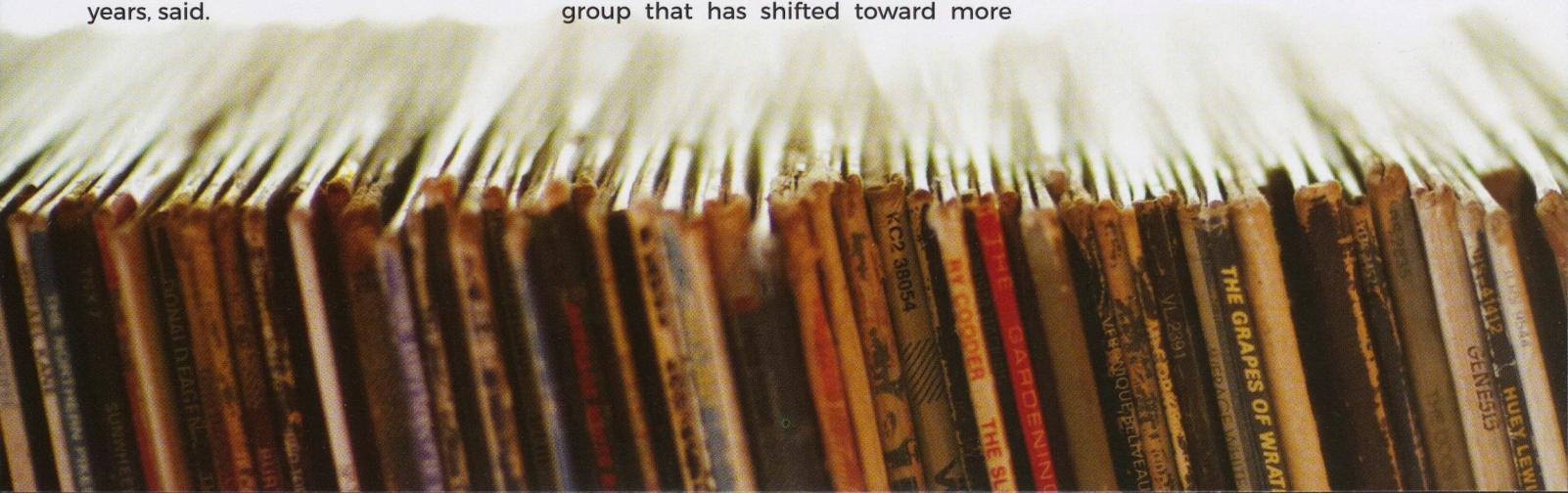
"Some of the older people who got married collect cars now or real estate," Ostermeier said. "They don't need as much vinyl anymore, but the younger people are picking the new One Direction or Adele [records] so they have something to play on their new record players from Best Buy."

Digital music on CDs and online streaming of music have less distortion, are more convenient to play and require less maintenance than vinyl records, Andrew Nittoli, an audio engineer for the Stony Brook University music department, said. However, digital music lacks the engaging experience of touching what you want to hear, and this is another factor bolstering the sale of vinyl.

"I mean look at your laptop. It's a keyboard and a flat surface. There's nothing really interesting to it," said Nittoli. "Where as with analog music you have knobs, dials and mechanicals things to look at, think about, and wonder what they do. It's easier for someone to identify with it."

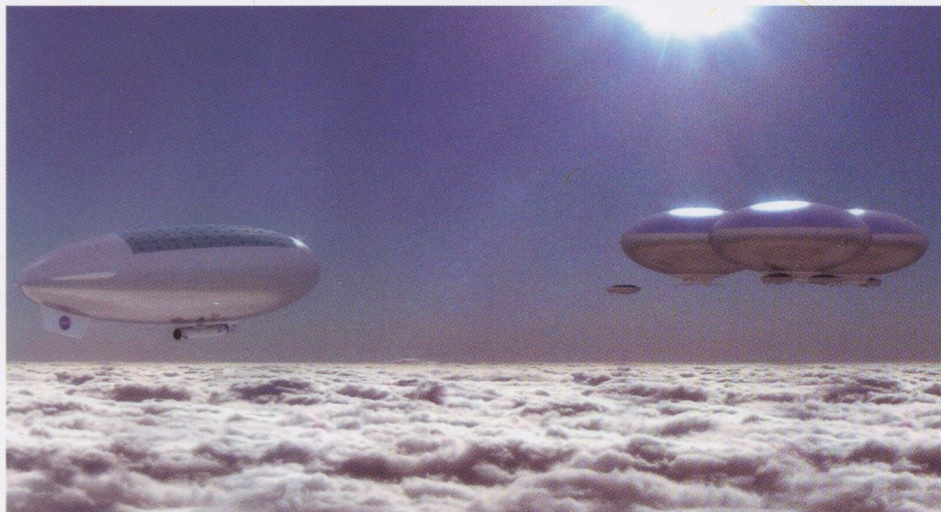
Ordering vinyl records for a growing fan base is expensive and a risk for small bands with no means of promoting their music, Jon Gusman, drummer for the Long Island band Soda Bomb, said.

"A lot of bands take huge losses pressing vinyl because they do it before anyone gives a shit about anything they're doing," Gusman said. "Vinyl is the most expensive physical release a band can put out, but on the other hand if someone does pick your record up it means you're worth that coughing up a few extra bucks."





MANKIND'S NEXT GIANT LEAP: MARS or VENUS?



DAN E. MOLONEY

It was July 20, 1969. Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the surface of the Moon, blowing the minds of the 125 million Americans who watched the moonwalk on television.

Nearly 50 years later, people are wondering what's next for mankind. Ever since the U.S. flag was planted onto the lunar surface, colonizing outer space has been a dream of space nerds everywhere. Despite there being no manned missions to Mars, it remains the focus of our next destination.

Many dream of a permanent settlement on Mars, but there are naturally several boundaries preventing human settlement, and science has not yet found the answers to any of these problems. This begs the question: is colonizing Mars a foreseeable possibility, and if not, is any planet?

Mars One, a non-profit organization with the goal of a permanent settlement on Mars, plans to depart people on a one-way trip to the Red Planet in 2026, a mere decade away. Is such a mission actually possible? The short answer is no. In 2015, Mars One representatives debated the feasibility of their permanent settlement plan with MIT students. The debate showed that Mars One's plan to start sending people to die on Martian soil may not hatch into reality, a surprise to nearly nobody.

Humans are stuck on square zero in space colonization. Even if Mars One were to work and people began living on Mars in the 2030s, or if NASA were able to magically terraform the Martian surface so that people could walk around without a spacesuit, that doesn't solve the gravity issue.

Gravity on the Martian surface is 62 percent less than that of Earth's. Prolonged exposure to such a difference in gravitational force leads to a loss in bone mass among other problems for humans.

If Martian gravity is an unavoidable obstacle in colonization, there is a planet we could travel to with a gravitational force similar to that of Earth's: our "sister planet," Venus.

It's known as our sister planet for a reason; gravity on Venus is much closer to what is ideal for man compared to Mars, at 0.9 Earth g's. And that's not the only advantage the second rock from the sun has over the fourth. Depending on the time of year, Venus is 30-50 percent closer to Earth than Mars is. That makes traveling to and from Venus, for both manned and unmanned spacecraft, much less timely and costly.

Venus is also closer to the sun, which means four times more solar power. There is more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which in theory means that it is easier to extract oxygen. Also, the atmosphere is much thicker on Venus, which allows for better protection against space radiation and meteorites. The Venusian year is closer to Earth's, at about 225 Earth days. The Martian year is close to 700 Earth days.

When considering gravity, the atmosphere, solar power and the length of a year, Venus starts to look like a more realistic planet for further exploration than Mars. But there are a few major disadvantages Venus has. The greenhouse effect on Venus can make the surface temperature over 450 degrees Celsius (842 degrees Fahrenheit). If you were to walk around on Venus, your blood would boil, and you would die. But it's not necessarily a guarantee that your blood would boil on Venus. If you're lucky and the temperature doesn't get to you, the pressure will. The pressure on Venus is over 90 Earth atmospheres, meaning a walk on Venus would be like diving 1,000 meters underwater. Your body, like the probes NASA has sent to Venus, would simply implode.

In theory, living on a planet isn't possible if you can't walk on it. So any hopes of colonizing

Venus is dead, right? Not quite. In 2014 the High Altitude Venus Operational Concept was unveiled.

HAVOC is a multi-phase concept focused on establishing a permanent settlement on Venus using airships and floating cities. The appropriately-named concept wasn't thought up by someone who played Bioshock: Infinite for way too many hours but by NASA.

Scientists and engineers at the Systems Analysis and Concepts Directorate at NASA's Langley Research Center in Richmond, VA studied the feasibility of prolonged human presence on Venus and came up with HAVOC. It would establish a permanent settlement on Venus without man ever stepping onto the Venusian surface.

Although surface temperature on Venus may be approaching 900 degrees Fahrenheit, when you go about 50 kilometers (around 32 miles) above the surface, temperatures drop to around 158 degrees F. That's still hotter than what has ever been recorded on Earth, but it is manageable for humans living inside a structure. Pressure also normalizes so that our floating civilizations won't implode.

The first phase of HAVOC calls for probes to explore the Venusian atmosphere. The second phase would be a manned mission orbiting the planet for one month.


The third phase is when we actually enter the atmosphere, it would be a manned mission into the Venusian atmosphere for a month, before the fourth phase which would be a manned mission within the atmosphere for an entire year.

The final phase would allow for long-term human presence on Venus in floating structures, or what I call balloons. Living inside a balloon over a planet with a surface inhospitable for any living creature sounds like something out of a cheesy sci-fi movie where everything will clearly go horribly wrong. But according to the Langley researchers, it isn't a premise for a bad movie, but a very real concept.

NASA does not plan to fund HAVOC anytime soon; however, they consider the concept a possibility down the road, especially its first few phases that would allow crewed aircrafts to explore the Venusian atmosphere.

What is clear is that we are still very far from foreign planet colonization becoming a reality. Mankind is in the preliminary stages of such a feat, at a point in which we must measure our capability of achieving colonization goals.

Attempting to settle on distant planets begs the question: Is the Martian surface our next giant leap in space exploration, or could cloud cities over Venus, although outlandish, be an achievable goal for the coming generations? Only time, likely an amount of time longer than your lifespan, will tell.



CHINESE AND AMERICAN NOT CHINESE OR AMERICAN

DEMI GUO

2014

It was on a train between Wuhan and Xi'an that I did the most illegal thing in my life. I criticized the government.

Jing—a regular student at Zhongnan University of Economics and Law—had spoken about the argument over Weibo, China's online news blog, about whether or not to give independence to Tibet and Xinjiang and their ethnic minorities. But it was while our classmates—Stony Brook students like me—slept in their overnight train bunks that she and I sat down to talk about the divide between China and the United States.

She was a polite, soft-spoken girl studying French to become an international businesswoman. I had thought French was a useless language until I met fellow foreign students from Africa and France in our dormitories—which is rich coming from me, a German minor.

"How do Americans portray China?" she asked me. Outside, the Chinese countryside, in all its familiar unkempt greenness, dashed across the window. The countryside in eastern and central

China is nothing like the US countryside; it is more wild. "Because," she added, "in China, they always portray America badly."

I should not have been surprised, but I was. I had never heard anyone speak so plainly of the media relationship. I followed several news sources on Chinese policy, but as I explained, I realized myself that there was a pattern in US media—a prevalent focus on the human rights abuses and advances, including the one-child policy, only reluctantly reminding Americans that President Xi Jinping was cracking down on corrupt officials.

This past year, like other years, Time and CNN analyzed the military parades in Beijing's national day as a display of power and connected the marches alone to recent disputes with Japan—a relevant but overdone story.

Jing replied that the consistent focus on the negative was true in Chinese media too. What difference does it make if the news anchor is from a state-controlled press or a free press if all he tells us is select facts?

The conductor interrupted our conversation to suggest that I put my backpack on the overhead rack. Having

not heard, I stared blankly.

"She's American," said Jing as he grew frustrated. "Her parents did not teach her Chinese growing up."

"Well," said the conductor gruffly, "you're Chinese, and you're in China now. And since you're in China, you should speak Chinese."

I hesitated, trying to trigger my mind into Mandarin. Bilingualism is like a mechanism with a switch—you need to flick it to change modes, and one side has gone rusty.

"If I don't learn Chinese," I said carefully, "then what is the point of me coming here?"

Like all over-patriotic grandpas would, he beamed at me. "That's good. You still have some patriotism," he said. "You're still young. Take your time learning," he added, perhaps the nicest way any Chinese person can tell you to do your best.

Jing continued on to Asia's favorite topic, Japan.

"We don't like the government," she said, and I agreed heartily, thinking of the conservative Japanese prime minister, Abe Shinzo. "But we know that there is a difference between the government and the people. Especially



the younger generation.”

In 2012, anti-Japanese sentiment grew so strong that rioters across the country smashed Japanese-themed businesses. The recent dispute over a Japanese claim on the Diaoyu islands, which China also claims, had added insult to an injury of the Abe administration’s defense of World War II atrocities.

Compared to the myriad of Koreans, West Africans, Frenchmen, Pakistanis and Laotians I lived with, I had only seen three Japanese students around campus.

“Hey, foreigner!” The conductor had come back. I blinked at him innocently. “Do you know what today is? It’s Duanwu Jie,” he continued without waiting for my answer. I was still confused. In New York, we celebrate the Dragon Boat Festival in August. “Have you ever had zongzi? I’ll get you some.” And he hurried to the next car.

Of course I ate zongzi, the sticky rice meal wrapped in leaves. Usually it had peanuts and different kinds of meat in the center. I grew up eating Chinese and western dishes; I have a tongue for northern food, like stringbeans and duck, and I handle pepper better than my Cantonese father. But the people I met in China, including my own relatives and people I met at a wedding, worried about my ability to eat Chinese food, always pointing at a McDonald’s “just in case.” I also had to explain that, no, I am American but not all Americans are Christian. And to the grandma I rented bikes from outside of campus—no, you don’t have to be blonde to be American.

The conductor came back and dropped off two zongzi. “Happy Duanwu Jie,” he said.

It was at a sushi café by the University of Bonn that my friend and I discussed Hitler and Putin.

Victoria, the daughter of Polish immigrants—her father is from Silesia, the southern province passed through German and Polish hands throughout history—said “Danke” to the Korean owner, a strange experience for me, who often had friends translate on Flushing’s Korean-dominated Northern Boulevard. She would later enroll in the University of Bonn, which was once federal property of the Kingdom of Prussia—a detail that compliments her Prussian heritage and fixation on its famous king, Friedrich II.

Vladimir Putin had annexed Crimea earlier that year, and as aspiring historians we of course tied his rise to President to that of Adolf Hitler.

“He earned the love of the peasants,” Victoria said. “And he also climbed through the ranks in government.”

And since I was fresh out of Beijing, she asked me a familiar question. “What is China really like? Because in Germany, we always portray it negatively.”

I replied the way I had to Jing, but this time we talked about the Chinese diplomatic attitude towards the United States. It’s defiance, I explained. It’s a passive-aggressive, yes-we-can-work-together-but-don’t-try-to-push-us-around attitude. Because of the prevalent international image of the United States as the try-hard “world police,” which drops bombs on civilians in Syria but preaches human rights towards China, a culture it does not understand.

“Like Russia,” she replied.

Like Putin’s attitude towards the rest of Europe and the United States, regarding Ukraine.

By the time I had left Germany, what I understood was that while China and the United States never looked eye to eye, they were just the same.

2015

We met again in Berlin. The stories are in the news.

Syrian refugees had flooded into Germany. If I saw the effects in Berlin, I did not notice. Seeing people in niqabs and hijabs crossing the street to go shopping is nothing to me, who grew up in Queens, and, I thought, nothing to those who live in German cities. This is a country with a high count of Turkish immigrants.

But since the flood, the cultural issue of so many Syrians going into Germany at once has prompted frustrated screaming over social media about non-assimilating migrants, pressure on Chancellor Angela Merkel and an Arabic-language broadcast series, “Marhaba,” by German reporter Constantin Schreiber.

But Berlin is the alternative city, the city that Victoria noted to be much more friendly than the rest of Germany after a shopkeeper fussed over me with paper towels after I spilled soda outside his store. Germans are usually more stern and blunt, she said.

A German man who wore his pants low like a New York thug and spoke no English had spent at least 20 minutes guiding me to my hotel through a storm in Cologne, a western city, instead of jumping me, so I was not really feeling the stereotype.

We had made our way through Kurfürstendamm, Berlin’s shopping district, when she mentioned her father.

German education divides primary education by skill level, and her father teaches the “special education” classes—including children from Syria. “They don’t listen to some of the teachers because they’re women,” Victoria told me. They’re the most disruptive students, the “ghetto kids”—something I experienced in New York City public education and am not keen on experiencing again.

But, we agreed, it is not the children’s fault, not at first, that they were raised by conservative families. Assimilation and feminist progression—cultural diffusion—comes over time. It comes with generations, the same way New York City, known in “The Godfather” and Disney World’s Hollywood Studios sets for Italian influence, has given to Asian culture beyond Chinatown within 50 years.

Culture is a fluid, evolving thing. German culture may change with the inflow of migrants, but naturally. At its heart, it will remain quintessentially German. If the states that used to make up the region resisted and united to make modern Germany during the Franco-Prussian war, then withstood the split of the Iron Curtain that makes the culture of Berlin so kind and the economy of once-Soviet East Germany so worrying today, then this is the next chapter.

It is only the struggle in between that faraway generation and this one that is the problem.

It is easy to lose sight of the lessons you learned while travelling.

Between China and Germany, two cultures I can somewhat claim to understand, I have looked past American exceptionalism—whether it is that of a liberal college student or a conservative worker, I have peeked at the world through lens other than my own.

People are the same the world over; and yet each nation is diverse. After all, I look nothing like President Obama—the face of my nation—or anyone in Congress.

Understand that a nation is several cultures made into one. Understand that a Chinese American is no less an American than a Creole American or a German-Italian American. But also understand that a Chinese American can celebrate both the Dragon Boat Festival and Fourth of July in one breath.

And also understand that whatever you are thinking—that whether you see your country as a notorious former imperialist or a superpower morally forced to “save” the people of other countries, your rival across the water is thinking the same of his own country.

I cannot emphasize enough how I see the change of New York in the change of Germany and its neighbors. I cannot emphasize enough how similar the “liberal millennials” and nationalists of China are to those in the United States.

Despite the media, despite politics and human clannishness, we are the same the world over.

And the rest is history.



Harpsichording TO A ----- NEW CAREER

JULIANNE MOSHER

At 22 years old, Laurence Vesoly graduated from college with a degree. On the small piece of paper it said he spent his four years at Stony Brook University studying music and engineering.

He was one of dozens upon dozens of students who decided to devote their future careers to a passion and an art, music: a difficult field to eventually find a job in.

"I actually didn't expect to study music when I came here," Vesoly said in a private Facebook message. "I originally came here to study electrical engineering, and I graduated with degrees in both engineering and music this May."

After becoming heavily involved with the music department at SBU during his sophomore year, the graduate said that music "slowly took over my life and now it's what I want to do."

Originally being fluent on the piano, he became infatuated with another type of instrument that became his true love - the harpsichord. Now, over six months later, Vesoly took what he learned at Stony Brook and decided to finish his Master's degree at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music located in Bloomington, Indiana - one of the top music schools in the country, especially for early music.

Although he holds a certificate in his possession that states he is qualified in the knowledge and performance of the harpsichord, Vesoly still does not have a "real" music job as he puts himself through graduate school.

"I'm working part-time on the stage crew of the opera house here to pay bills," he said.

Speaking from personal experience and noticing what his friends and colleagues dealt with when they also graduated with music degrees, Vesoly said that

he thinks it is extremely difficult to get a job with solely a Bachelor in music.

"I think all careers are different," he said. "I think it's very, very hard to find a job with just a music degree."

He added that "a lot of people who want to seriously do classical music for a living go on to grad school for it" and eventually get doctorates. "That's different from, say, engineering, where they prefer you have a Bachelor's, which is why I'm glad I double majored... It's a fantastic Plan B," he said.

However there are places that are willing to help young students find their path. MajoringInMusic.com is a website that is dedicated to supporting prospective music students make decisions when it comes to career searching. For five years, the website has assisted college graduates, prospective majors and their parents - who are sometimes unable to understand certain things because they are not professional musicians themselves. The website has articles, forums and an easily accessible contact page where students can ask professionals, counselors and people with a music degree what their advice is as they near closer to the finish line.

Barbra Weildlein of the site said that most music majors do not have a steady job lined up for them as soon as they leave college. She added that students who graduate from high school with intentions of studying music need to start planning early on about what career goals they want to achieve four to five years later.

"They need to be thinking of their career goals even as freshmen, to help them figure out the kinds of training, experiences and internships that will best prepare them for their futures," she said in an email. "They are encouraged to learn about and join national

music organizations to find out more about their areas of interest."

Like many careers, she said that music students need to realize that once they get into college, networking is important for their futures.

"Entrepreneurship skills are important to help them self-start all or parts of their careers," she added. "Even today's music teachers need this kind of training - they are called on to fundraise, recruit students, be excellent communicators with administrators, students, parents, the community at large - all while continuing to maintain robust programs."

Weildlein also acknowledged that graduate degrees are valuable but not necessarily important when it comes to finding a job.

"Certainly for academic fields like college teaching and musicology but more and more for fields like music therapy, music education and composition," she said.

"For performance, artist diploma and certificate programs can be helpful for polishing one's performance skills as well as for preparing for auditions for festivals and for trying to secure one of the limited numbers of symphony jobs - these programs require a Bachelor of Music degree and are strictly performance-oriented," she added. "They are not degree programs."

And although she believes that new jobs are always going to pop up in the music field with new technology and with different ways of consuming music, Weildlein still hears the thoughts of concerned students all of the time.

"The common emotion we hear from students who contact us, and who attend presentations we do, is passion," she said. "Anyone majoring in music - or planning to - needs that passion to survive and flourish in this demanding and challenging field."



Along with getting questions from upcoming high school graduates, the site gets a lot of doubt from college grads trying to get a job and pay off their loans. "We get questions from prospective job seekers who are worried about their futures, comments from music therapists who revel in their work, comments from people who went successfully into other fields from a music school background and occasionally from disgruntled music school grads who haven't been able to create the life in music they had envisioned," Weildein said.

Vesyoly said that during his time in school, he encountered people who found jobs not in the music field but because they had that extra degree in the art.

"I've known some music majors who double majored in [music and] SOC or PSY and got into law school," he said. "It's more common than you think. My best friend earned her Master's in Science Education while finishing her music degree, and now she teaches high school bio."

But for those students - especially at Stony Brook - who majored simply in music with no other major, they feel worried that they won't be able to find a job with just the one title.

Joanna Durso, senior career counselor at the Career Center on campus, said that last year from June 1, 2014 until May 31, 2015, 23 music majors visited the office in hopes of getting help. That number does not include the one Master's music major and the four Doctoral level students studying the same major.

These 28 students visited the Career Center located in the lower level of the library seeking one-on-one career advice, on-campus recruitments, workshops and other events.

"Our processes to help these students get jobs are generally the same as our processes for students in any other academic program," she said. "The first step is to understand what sort of job each student wants... it doesn't always look 100 percent directly related to the name of the major. Sometimes this also requires educating the student about the range of jobs available to him or her."

Durso will sit down with interested

students and brainstorm different ideas as to what they want to do when they're out of school.

"If a student is looking for a traditional, classical or jazz performance career, or to teach, we can discuss it, but [we] would also strongly encourage her to go back to the music faculty for advice since that's exactly what they do," she said. "Students interested in performance careers of any kind sometimes also have to think about 'day jobs,' the non-performance jobs that keep them afloat while they're building their performance careers to a financially sustainable point, and that's a conversation I have often."

At the Career Center, Durso will highlight specific things that students need to focus on when it comes to making their career goals a reality. For example, if a student simply wants to create a rock band and start that up with his music degree, she said that she would tell him to network rather than create a solid resume.

But when students come to the center with a resume in hand and completely ready to go, Durso said that Handshake, an employment database available at the university, is a huge tool in helping Stony Brook students find a job to pay the bills.

"We maintain relationships with hiring organizations in the music industry and the arts as well as most other fields, encouraging them to recruit and hire our students," she said.

As for Vesyoly, he said that he's just going to focus on finishing his Master's before his next musical endeavor, but he still has a few goals ahead of him like maybe getting his Doctrine one day, "but that's a long way off, so I have plenty of time to think about it."

"My dream job would be getting an early music group together and going on tour or playing with a good baroque orchestra," he said, noting that it is hard for harpsichordists to play in modern orchestras since they are too loud. "But, like I said, that's just the dream, and I suspect I'll need to work hard for many more years until I accomplish it."





...Paper Doll Vintage



JULIANNE MOSHER

Two shops down from the Starbucks at 23 N Main Street in Sayville, NY, a boutique stands right next to an old barbershop. The two displays on both sides of its windows are updated at the beginning of each month and showcase an artistic rendition of something fashion. In October, a group of flappers stood alongside small artistic sculptures that resemble jack-in-the-boxes. They are abstract but they tell a story. It's October and Halloween is coming soon. A few homemade, black-laced masks lay on the floor facing the

window, peering out as people walk by.

But in the blink of an eye, it was the start of November and 1970s vintage pieces clothe the mannequins in red, orange and yellow ponchos. They wear tall brown leather boots and carry purses with tan fringes to celebrate the start of the Thanksgiving holiday. The mannequin in the left window wore an authentic 1970s vest with rainbow tribal print as white strings dangled from the wooly fabric. Tall brown boots sprouted from the floor.

A rack of clothes usually hangs outside the right-hand window with a yellow poster board attached. In black writing it exclaims to bystanders, "SALE: Only \$20!" Some argyle sweaters and a few pairs of pants hang on the silver rod. People passing through the shady sidewalks stop to look at the dressed up dolls in the window, and then begin flipping through the clothing rack. If interested, they are going to step inside. The usual customers who stopped in were young women who carried old souls.

The soft pink walls inside radiate off a middle age woman around 40 years old who looks through the vintage nightgowns. She flips through the ivory and white silks but stops at one old chiffon piece. She calls over her elderly mother a few feet away. "Mom, look. Vintage pajamas." The small old woman walks over and examines the fabric in her daughter's hand. "They have great stuff," she says quietly.

Three-and-a-half years ago, Dominique Maciejka opened a boutique that stands out from the pizzerias, bagel stores and nail salons which decorate most of Long Island's main streets. The store is a fresh and lovely change of pace from the department stores, malls and the multiple shopping centers that dominate the area. It is a vintage clothing store that's filling the closets of people who admire older and unique types of clothing called Paper Doll Vintage.

Maciejka is young and completely devoted to her store. The tall woman with long, light brown hair has big eyes that sparkle when she smiles. Her face has sharp angles. Less than five minutes away from the Fire Island Ferry docks, her shop is dedicated to the selling and buying of vintage fashions. From the early 20th century to recently designed reproductions of retro designs, Paper Doll Vintage is Barbie's dream closet for the young women in town who want a piece of the past. Walking through the white front door that sometimes blows open on windy days, seven racks surround the store behind the extravagant windows. There are two racks standing right behind the windows. They hold new pieces - recreations of vintage patterns - that fit people as small as a size zero all the way to a 3X. Maciejka's friend Kristin MacDougal, who works at Paper Doll during the weekend, says that's one of the best things about the store.

MacDougal, a returning art student at Stony Brook University, said that sizes were different during the 50s, 60s and 70s. Women had smaller waistlines or would often have the clothing



tailored to fit their body perfectly. The trouble with that inside a vintage shop is that not all women can enjoy the clothing because not everyone can be a size two. The new reproductions allow women of all sizes and shapes to enjoy and experiment with vintage.

"Paper Doll Vintage is not just a store," MacDougal said. On the walls that surround the racks of clothing, shoes and handbags hang portraits painted and printed by local artists. Every month they change - some are abstract and some are as realistic as a photograph. Every month the shop closes its doors to shoppers and instead holds art shows for artists in the area. At the start of December, MacDougal's work will be presented and celebrated. "It's a place for alternative culture," she said. "There's no regular here."

The store's art appreciation comes from Maciejka's past. The Smithtown native studied art, sculpture and technology performance at the Art Institute of Chicago, which carried over when she combined her love for the arts with her other passion, fashion, in her store filled with vintage finds.

She always had a business approach to life, she said, even when she was young. "I was always, like the kid at school that was selling lollipops, and I had the lemonade stand," she said, smiling her huge white smile. "I would always sell stuff at garage sales and do better than my mom and sister combined because I was always a hustler and a salesperson." Growing up on Long Island, the tall slender woman said that she loved rummaging through vintage even as a kid. She and her mother would visit garage sales and thrift stores trying to find something unique. When she turned 13, she began to profit from her findings.

"When I was 12 or 13 and I wasn't old enough to legally work yet, my parents let me use their bank account to start an eBay account 'cause that came out around 1997," Maciejka said as she stood behind the glass counter inside her shop. She glanced down at her iPhone that was placed upon the clean, shiny tabletop - a glass case with sunglasses, jewelry and watches encased within it.

"I was like, 'Alright I can sell my stuff on the internet,' and I started seeing things at garage sales and thrift stores that I was like, 'I think this is worth more money, I think I've heard of this Chanel brand before,'" she added. "I would come across things and try flipping the money on eBay."

However the eBay store began getting difficult to handle so Maciejka began hoarding her vintage finds in her parents house until she could afford to open her own store. Soon enough she started looking at different towns on Long Island where her store would fit in. "It's not the type of store that fits in between a pizzeria, a Chinese food place and a deli, so I had to really figure out where a good spot would be that would get a lot of traffic."

And it does. The Black Friday weekend was filled with interested shoppers who strayed out of the malls and

corporate controlled shopping centers. June Von Gizycki, a thin, dark-haired woman with golden, tanned skin is a returning customer who comes all the way to Sayville from Bay Ridge, Brooklyn just to shop at Maciejka's store.

Von Gizycki thinks that Paper Doll is a great place to get something unique. "The owner has an eye for vintage," she said. "You can tell."

"There aren't a lot of shops like this in Brooklyn," Von Gizycki said. "All of my clutches are from here," she added as she stood next to her best friend, Mary Ann Hesse, a Sayville native. The two visit the shop whenever Von Gizycki visits Long Island and every time she picks up another piece for her collection.

As Von Gizycki paid for her clutch bag and admired another purse that hung on a shelf above the cash register, MacDougal, with her short, blonde, wavy hair and thick blocky frames, stood behind the accessory adorned counter.

She talked with Von Gizycki and Hesse about what they wore "back in the day." Von Gizycki talked about how she met Sting when she was a teenager in the city and their favorite types of punk rock. MacDougal with a pleasant smile on her face nodded eagerly as she listened.

The two friends smiled and waved as they opened the white door that sticks. "What a beautiful shop," Hesse whispered to Von Gizycki as they walked out.

"I love to talk to customers about their fashion and what they were back then," MacDougal said as she walked over to a clothing rack to pick out more pieces that could decorate the mannequins in the window.

Maciejka works seven days a week and always has Paper Doll on her mind. "The store is something I created," she said. "It's my baby." About once a week, she travels to the city to go to different antique auctions hoping to find something good for her shop. The clothing, shoes, accessories and handbags that lay within her store are not cheap or old looking. Every item she brings in is thoroughly checked to make sure there are no

stains, no tears and no signs of wear. The pieces look brand new but, luckily for whoever purchases them, hold a story within history.

The things that customers can find at Paper Doll Vintage are fascinating. On a hat rack are bowl hats like Annie Hall's, mini 1930s style caps with black lace hanging in front, fedoras and Russian styled snow hats. Chunky 1980s jewelry sits in a glass bowl up front; bright greens, yellows and purples and neon pinks. On a shelf in the back is a mannequin torso that wears a 1970s styled, suede brown jacket with cheetah heels placed tastefully next to it. Just walking inside the tiny little shop on Main Street can create any style that wants to be made.

"I'll never dress normal," MacDougal said laughing. "And retro is the only thing that's really fashionable nowadays." A woman walks in with a man wearing a leather jacket. They head straight towards the wall of shoes in the back. "This is a community of people of people who want to look different," she said looking over at them. "And this is the place to get it."



— Venezia Di Notte —

JOSEPH RYDER

1. St. Mark's Campanile: The original tower was constructed in the 9th century and served as a lighthouse for the dock. In 1902 the tower collapsed days after a large crack was first noticed on the north wall. City officials decided to rebuild the tower exactly how it was with additional support. Construction of the present tower finished in 1912.

2. St. Marks Basilica: The earliest form of the church was ordered in 828 by the Doge of Venice to house the relics of St. Mark the Evangelist following their theft from Alexandria by Venetian merchants. The current form of the basilica was completed in the 13th century. In 1807 by order of Napoleon. St. Mark's became the cathedral for Venice. The Cathedral is one of the best known examples of Italo-Byzantine architecture

3. Molino Stucky: The building was first built in 1895, making it a very new structure by Venetian standards. The mill was used for various functions including making pasta until 1955 when the mill closed due to labor disputes. In the mid-2000s Hilton agreed to terms to convert the neo-gothic structure into a 379 room hotel.

4. Palazzo Ducale: The Ducal Palace

was finished in its current form in the 15th century and served as the seat of power for the Venetian government. The structure is famous for its Venetian Gothic architecture and it incorporates elements of Byzantine, Ottoman and northern European design.

5. Bridge of Sighs: The enclosed bridge passes over the Rio di Palazzo and connects the Venetian Prison to the interrogation rooms in the Doge's Palace. The bridge gets its name from English poet Lord Byron who wrote that prisoners would sigh going across the bridge as they caught their last glimpse of Venice through the barred windows.

6. Campo San Bartolomeo: This lively field is just steps from the Rialto bridge and is a very active and popular social and commercial center in Venice. In the center of the field stands a statue of famous Venetian playwright Carlo Goldoni.

7. Piazza San Marco: This area, also called St. Mark's Square serves as the principal public space in Venice and was the location of important state functions and ceremonies. The eastern end of the Piazza is dominated by St. Mark's Basilica and bell tower. It's alleged that Napoleon called the Piazza San Marco "the drawing room of Europe."



Battles Without Bullets

A story of Civil War reenactors and re-fighting the Civil War

KYLE BARR

Color Sergeant Daniel Blander caresses his 1861 Springfield rifle. It is a cloudless day in 1864. It is a bright, hot day in 2015. Blander is a young man now, and then. But time is irrelevant.

He runs his hands along the polished wood stock and holds onto the butt. It's a heavy weapon, all the way from its stock to its barrel, elegant and artistic in the way that only hand-made things are. It's a front loading musket used in a time when to fire three or four rounds a minute meant you were a professional soldier. It still feels dangerous to hold.

The 67th First Long Island Volunteers, Company K, have camped themselves on the southern side of the field for the reenactment. The confederate soldiers are parked somewhere out of sight. Their tents are pitched in long rows, and rise to waist height. While there are 25 Union soldiers walking around laughing and languishing in their undershirts beneath the midday sun, Blander is the only one to look to the north.

A grey coat flashes against the green of the field. The eyes bulge out of his face.

"Oh shit."

He flings his cartridge box around his waist and sprints towards the picket line with the rifle clenched in his fist. His pack flaps like a loose flag against his side.

For a second he darts out of sight, the camp grows suddenly silent like all the air has been sucked from the field. Broken, then, with the huge, cracking sound as the rifle fires, like the sound of a smashing walnut that echoes across the field. A burst of smoke rises above the tents of the camp. Blander is sprinting back, his spent rifle is clenched in his fist. A confederate soldier is running at him and screams the rebel yell, a ululating, piercing scream, the battle cry which puts fear into the hearts of Union soldiers.

Really, there are only two rebels in the field. They are a couple skirmishers sent to harass the Union line. The Northern soldiers pour fire on the two men from behind their barricade of large, X shaped structures called Cheval de Frix. Their smoke creates a screen in front of their eyes. The motions become mechanical. Bite the cartridge. Spill the powder down the barrel. Pick up the rifle. Put in a new cap. Pull back the hammer. Pull to your shoulder. Level the rifle. Fire. Reload. Fire. Reload, like machines that spit smoke and death. The smells

of hay, horse and burning wood had been replaced with the odor of sulfur in the air.

"Dress left," Lieutenant Tom Demaria yells. He is a man with white hair and a genial face. The union soldiers are confused, and for the first time, the spell is broken. "Guys," Demaria whispers. "It means move left," They finally understand and shuffle to the left along the side of the barricade.

While their rifles are loaded in the same way they were back in the 1860's, they use no bullets. It is simply a cartridge of black powder, and a percussion cap to explode the charge. A huge volume of smoke pours from the rifle's muzzles, but no bullets fly out. The most danger these soldiers are in is if the powder explodes in their face, but that rarely if ever happens. They never use their ramrods to load any charge in case they accidentally forget and leave it in the to create a miniature sized rocket.

Far into the field, a rebel falls onto the ground. His friend raises his hat in surrender. Demaria leads his prisoners across the field. One rebel leans on the shoulder of the other. The injured one limps to the side of his friend, who strains under the weight. They make a good show of it.

But this isn't a stage. Blander is sweating in the beating sun. His plaid shirt is showing stains, and his hair is matted underneath his yankee forage cap. He sighs.

"I hate it when they do that, you don't know when they're gonna do that." Blander is half annoyed, half amused at the brashness of their enemy. They know when the large battle will take place later in the day, but they don't know when the southern forces will send people to harass them. They know which people will decide to take falls, or pretend to be injured or shot, but when the bullets are supposedly flying, and when they are marching in tempo, they are in "First Person." They take the place of the people on the battlefield they are there to reenact.

They cook in real fire pits. Blander holds a tin cup filled with stew and

sits down on a camp chair next to the unit's captain, Joe Billardello. The food in Blander's tin cup is searing, and smoke rises from it's contents. He burns his tongue on the first bite and curses under his breath. Billardello gives him a wry smile. He likes to joke with his men, calling out names to make an in-joke.

Captain Billardello is a big man, and his New York accent billows him so that he becomes almost a physical representation of the company's identity, like a bedrock. His light blue scarf around his neck along with the pistol constantly on his belt denotes his rank. The soldiers walk in and out of the tent to ask him questions or to share a joke. When he tells people to work, or to stand at attention, he expects it done. Most of the time, they do it.

It is like that as their 2015 season comes to an end. The 67th host the weekend at the Grange in September, attend the huge battle at Cedar Creek in Virginia at the end of October and march in the huge parade at Gettysburg for remembrance day in November. It is a charade that flows in and out of time. Far off in the distance of the Grange, the deception falls away with a few rainbow colored playgrounds of a nearby public park.

Its an expensive hobby. To buy all the equipment up front, including the uniform and the tent could cost a person several thousand dollars. That is not even including the rifle, something that could cost hundreds or even thousands of dollars. There are mass market products out there, but they are shunned by the historically focused reenactment groups. Most of their equipment is made by manufacturers called sutlers. While the 67th does not whine about every out of place button or unpolished piece of brass,





they themselves try to present a form of historical accuracy not just with their uniforms, but with their posture, upright, their rifles held to the sides with the top resting on their arm and their hand holding onto the butt.

This facade of history runs like veins through all of the 67th's activities, and the blood of reenacting is all about accuracy. The 67th calls the Sayville Grange its home. It's a small collection of old standing houses, like the Tuthill house, built in the 1850's and later moved onto the Grange, and the old church, gleaming in the sun with its chipping white paint. When they stand in first person, they create a bubble in time where ideas and reactions, of death and doctrine recreate a time long gone.

The year is 1864, and Confederate Lieutenant General Jubal Early launches a surprise attack on the union forces under the command of Major General Philip Sheridan stationed along Cedar Creek south of Middletown, Virginia. What starts out as a rout of the union forces later turns into the rout and destruction of Early's forces. A battle that would encompass tens of thousands of soldiers on both sides is recreated by a group that number a fraction of the men who once trampled the grass of that Virginia field.

What it allows is something more personal to show through. The men walk in lockstep, a young drummer named Alec Israeli beats a time just beside them. There are men in there you know. Men who walk into the gunfire of the enemy. Billardello walks in front, Blander holds the flag high just behind the small line. There are others there. John Roarty has only recently joined the company, a man who loves writing historical fiction. There is private Mike Boyle, a large man with a white beard. There is Owen Folley, a spectacled man who runs the commissary. In a time where muskets were incredibly inaccurate, when even at a range of 50 yards there was a good chance a ball would miss, to see such men walking into a hail of smoke brings forth a memory of horror. What is worse to see, to read

of numbers of the degree of men killed, and how, or to watch men you know march in step towards rolling thunder and a drowning smoke? That one brief moment when the veneer of time melts away.

Kevin O'malley sits on the field with his legs out in front of him. He's there in a wide brimmed hat, plaid shirt and a vest. A small book of beige colored paper is in his hands. He holds a small nubbed pencil and draws the men with several furious flourishes of his fingers as they walk towards the roar of rifles.

"There were still journalists back then," O'Malley says. "But they didn't have cameras. They would do sketch drawings."

This small piece of history is drawn in pencil and charcoal with a detail like scratch outlines but in the vein of American Realism. Soldiers and civilians are drawn from the effects of recreated battlefields. One displays two lone cavalymen standing on a small hill. Another shows a family bringing groceries to the soldiers camp. Several display flags of the stars and stripes and the stars and bars waving in the backgrounds of black and white fields.

"I remember when I was about eight starting to draw by copying from the Sunday comics peanuts and Charlie Brown. Been drawing and painting since. It becomes rewarding to me when folks see the work, initiating conversations about their interests as well."

The drawings are kept in black and white. Confederate flags and Union flags are understood by their shape and their design. The colorless flags are so similar, as black and white as the stark ideological differences of two assumed American identities.

The two parties keep to their respective camps at the Grange, and separate themselves by faction when they march in the Gettysburg parade. The Union soldiers have pressed uniforms. The Confederates are much more ragged. It was never so much a fight between the blues and greys, but

a fight between the blues and whatever the Confederate soldiers had on them when they went to war.

There isn't any uniformity to the uniforms of the Confederate soldiers. Underneath their vaguely grey jackets their plaid shirts show through. Some of them wear slouch

hats, others texans and planters. Straw and felt. They are a ragged group that from a distance form a ragged line of dirt brown and smoke grey. When the Union soldiers first see that ragged line, they laugh, they don't expect anything, all before the bullets fly.

Private Jacob Fish of the 30th Virginia looks like that. "I wanted to join a yankee unit but they told me I could only be a drummer," he says. He's been reenacting for 12 years now. His friends are there with the Confederate army. Another soldier takes out a can of WD40 from a small wood toolbox. With a passive face he sprays a mist down into the muzzle of his barrel. Fish laughs.

"If the confederates had WD40, they would have won the war."

The two sides of the war act more like football teams than two actual sides to a nation spanning conflict. When they line up for photos at the end of their battle at the grange. The two shout their names one after another, the union giving their yell and the confederates their screech.

The captain of the 30th that day on the Grange, Michael Mienko, has the young face of a male model with a slight goatee growing on his 5 o'clock shadow. He's been doing Civil War reenactments for 9 years. Underneath his vest is embroidered in golden swirling patterns. He joined because his friends were in the confederates, but he doesn't care about the sides. If he was in war, he would have turned traitor several times. "One day I'll do Union, one day I'll do reb."

Among one of the 30th Virginia's higher ranks, there is a general appreciation for the old Southern Generals. With a long pointed beard and black straggly hair Patrick Falci has tried to make himself look as close to his role model as he can, Confederate General A.P Hill. He has gone so far as to portray the man in several movies, including the 1993 film Gettysburg. He looks the part. He plays the part on the battlefield. The other Confederate soldiers show him a deference and respect when they sit around their camp.

"I started it when I was young," Falci says. He pours through American Heritage books as a young man and would read everything he could about the southern Generals Lee and Jackson. He says he wants young people to start learning on the impact of the Civil War, especially the end of slavery.

"Before the Civil War, we 'were,' after we became 'are.' We're here to honor all of the men, north and south, who died. Because we are all Americans."

The southern soldiers around him nod. "Amen," they say.

In first person, they are supposed to call at the other team, to shoot in the air and taunt them. "yankees," the





southern soldiers call the northern. To the Union, the Confederates are "rebs" or "rebels," without question. It's said so casually around the camp. A kid in a blue shirt, not old enough to comprehend the difference in flags in front of him, says "I don't want to be grey, I want to be blue."

A passing confederate soldier smiles. "You in the wrong camp then, dem Yankees're over there."

The 67th have become more than a club, more than just a hobby group. "None of us makes any personal profits," says Secretary of the 67th Max Kenny, a man with angular face and troughs in the sides of his head where his small, oval rimmed spectacles seem to bracket into.

2015 is only the second year they were able to collect money from the grange event, and the rest of their money comes from events for schools and other programs they attend. Then, they will donate their money to civil war battlefield preservation. Much of it they put into MATCH programs that for every dollar they donate, the federal government donates three.

"There's a brotherhood in this," Billardello says.

The soldiers on both sides of the field treat each other with respect, whether it's a battle or a march, but the yankees all have stories of the opposite, of reenactors from the south for whom the war never ended. Blander, when he was still a private, was up on the hill at Gettysburg, at the recreation of the battle for Little Round Top. The confederates were supposed to march forward and the Union soldiers were to force them back. One soldier, who Blander described as a drunken reb, forced his way forward, looking to take the Union flag. If they did, it would be one of the greatest dishonors a company could face. They were in first person, the adrenaline was pumping. Blander shoved the Confederate soldier back into a trench, who stumbled back and fell on top of the other

confederates. He came forward again. Blander held his rifle back, and was ready to swing it at him and crash his stock across the soldier's face when the captain came by, yelling at them to stop, ask them what the hell was happening.

Another time, it was night, and a drunken rebel soldier came out from the dark. In his hand he held a bowie knife by his side. He sat down across from the captain's table, and called a nearby soldier a girl. In that tense moment, Blander took a pocket knife out and held it under the table. The soldier eventually walked away.

Blander tells them like ghost stories, like tales said around a campfire. The vast majority of confederates are normal people, they say, but for the few that aren't there is a general recognition of fear.

Dr. Marvin Glassmann finishes cleaning his horse, Buster, a 28-year-old quarterhorse just after the fight at the Grange. He rides with the 10th New York Volunteer Cavalry, Company C. There are only three of them in that group, two of them are husband and wife.

He has seen those reenactors who take the facade so seriously, and has even read books about it. He cites *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* by Tony Horwitz, a book about southern reenactors who are, in their minds, still fighting the Civil War. For Glassmann, he and his small group not only do Civil War, but also American Revolution and Rough Riders. "For most of us, it's a hobby and it's fun. I'd rather ride than work."

The Soldiers are marching. The Flags are flying, Blander holds his huge standard high, yards behind the main line. It is designed after the old battle standard that the old 67th used over a century ago. On the other side of the field, the Confederates do the same.



hold enmity. They care about the historicity, and the presentation. Their professionalism as reenactors gives them poise, like the professional soldier would on the parade ground. The guns they put to their shoulders house no bullets.

A civil war rifle feels dangerous, but it is nothing compared to modern killing instruments. On June 17, 2015, a white man named Dylan Roof walked into the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina and using a Glock 41 .45 calibre handgun, a weapon that weighs little less than a soup can, and killed nine people, including the pastor. He later admitting to trying to start a race war. When he was arrested, the police found his website where he posted pictures of the Confederate battle flag.

The crowd at the Grange was large, much larger than they expected or they received in a long time. Still, the members of the reenactment aren't ignorant of what has brought so many people. It is the controversy involving the confederate flag, and how there are places in the south from the South Carolina to Florida where the controversy over the confederate flag rages.

The 67th is a yankee brigade. They come from a yankee part of the United States. The legacy of the Civil War has left its mark, and the north identifies with the north. The racial tensions and inequality of today is inevitably tied to the Civil War and its aftermath. The reenactors believe they are living historians. They try to present things as accurately as possible to give people a lesson in what the Civil War was like. But the conflict surrounding the fighting, the conflict of two warring identities, is much harder to recreate. Much less do the reenactors desire to do so.

The march at Gettysburg attracts hundreds of people who line the roads to spectate. Taking place in Southern Pennsylvania makes it like a spot where both men from the north and south come to watch and attend. A Confederate officer on a horse pulls on the reins, and the horses lifts its two front legs and whinnies. The man shouts, "All right, who's here, from, VIRGINIA!" His response is a few claps, and a couple behind him raise their



After a battle, they pose for pictures. They shake hands like little leaguers after a soccer game. For all the shouts, for all the shots, for all the smoke and all the fake blood, the reenactors don't



They become a faceless mass. Along Baltimore Avenue in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, the soldiers of the Union and Confederate march. It is one of the largest gatherings of reenactors in the Northern part of the United States. Around the curve of the hill they rise and march down Baltimore Ave

and into Steinweht ave, a line of men that stretch to the horizon. There are thousands of them. The smell of pipe smoke and a cool november wind along with the discordant sound of a hundred different drums and fifes drifts down the close packed streets.

Gettysburg is an old town that wears its history on its sleeve, then sells that sleeve. In the center of town, every business is tied to Civil War history. If it isn't a sutler, it is a painting shop that sells nothing but art from Dale Gallon, bloodless art, and the store owner flutters between the patrons. There are home-made ice cream shops that sell bottled sarsaparilla. The pubs are themed civil war. There are too many Civil War tour companies to count. The buildings that were once houses have been converted into storefronts. The people who watch by the sidelines clap lightly as the troops march by. Some are dressed in period clothes. One man, obviously having a good time, marches yelling "Ha ha, I'm rich," while tossing fake gold coins to the crowd.

Before the march, and before the festivities, the moment is somber. Through the winding streets of Culp's Hill, the regimental monuments stand proud in the morning sun. This is where soldiers died, the large stone and marble seems to say. On a stretch of road with holds several other New York regiments, the monument to the original 67th regiment stands.

The new 67th do this every year. It is a tradition for most regiments to honor the people that died from their own regiment. They are dressed in full parade uniform, and each are handed a pair of white

gloves. They stand on either side of the tall monument, their rifles to their shoulders, standing at attention. History tells that the regiment suffered one casualty and several injuries in the battle for Culp's Hill, which was almost miraculous because of how close they were to the withering hail of the Confederate's fire.

The troops shoulder arms on both sides of the monument. Munkenbeck arrives to give commemoration. "While we today might wonder at the flowery language of the Victorian era," he says. "The words are just as applicable as they were then. To be a good soldier and die is a manly feat. To be a good soldier, and live, is manlier. To be a good citizen, upright before god and downright among men, is manliest of all, but is the most complex, difficult and least rewarded."

They fought their battles, buried their dead, went home with their wounded, and became citizens once more. The muster in surprised mankind, the muster out astounded them. The veterans and their families worked to rebuild a nation that had been damaged, and torn by the war, and we owe them a great deal, as they struggled to build the foundations of what we enjoy today, let us never forget the contributions towards this great nation."

Built in 1888, the monument looks much too clean for its age. Kenny says it was power washed 10 years ago, but the stone monument stands proud and unmarked. Proud as if it knows it has weathered time's efforts to tear apart memory and grind it under the marching boots of every creeping moment, until it becomes a fine dust to be swept away by the wind on the sloping hill.

Like it does for most things.

hands. He doesn't even see them.

The blue and the grey don't march together, but march one after the other. First the Union, then the Confederates. A small group is waving their small confederate flags and laughing as the confederate soldiers walk past. They are hooting, and calling after the men. Time evaporates. When the soldiers march, the people of the town come to cheer them on, to victory. This time, the supporters are mixed together on both sides of the street. This time the soldiers hold no bullets for their rifles.

Back on the real battlefields of the Civil War, the fights are often watched by scores of people. It is 1864. They set up picnics on hills where they can watch the battle unfold, where they are far away from the bullets and the blood that the scenes become painterly, like much of the art that gets displayed about this time. From behind fences, from the angle of lawn chairs, modern americans take their own part in the great facade. There is no blood, there is no death except for the occasional man who takes a fall and pretends to lay dying. George Munkenbeck, a registered chaplain for the 14th Brooklyn Infantry, Company H, narrates the battle of the grange through a microphone. The crowd mobs behind the fence.

"Those young boys from Sayville. You can see the union officer moving up to get a look and see what's going on."

"Boo Confederates!" a kid grasps at the fence in front of him until his hands are red, he pokes his eyes through the spaces in the fence to see what is happening. He shouts again. "Boo Confederates!"

"They're firing .44 and .45 caliber soft lead bullets."

"Boo Confederates! Boo Confederates!"

At the end of the battle, when the men have charged, and are brushing the dirt from their uniforms, George pipes above the claps from the crowd, "It was a typical skirmish, nothing was accomplished."

A young boy is crying in the background. Another kid pipes up, confused, "They're fighting people but don't they know they're on the same team?"





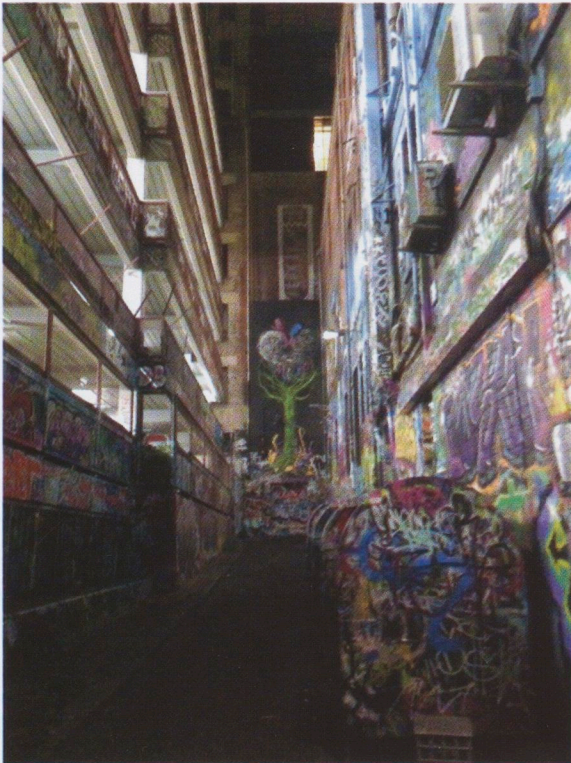
Welcome to Victoria, Australia

RICKY PATRICIA SOBERANO

Although this glorious country is known for its koalas, kangaroos, the outback and basically every creature that could possibly kill you, there's a lot more to it than one might expect (if you survive). This Aussie state is home to The Great Ocean Road, laid-back people in the bustling streets of the city of Melbourne who are beautiful inside and out and a culture overflowing with diversity that rivals that of NYC.

THE DANDENONG RANGES

In jungle-like fashion, the Ranges are home to trees stretching as high as city buildings. The isolated location makes it easy to forget how close you are to modern civilization especially with Puffing Billy, a blast-to-the-past locomotive that travels through the ranges, as a means of transportation along with the carved wooden sculptures of the William Ricketts Sanctuary.




LANEWAYS

In random alleyways and the on sides of buildings in Melbourne lies an organically produced sort of street art gallery showcasing artists who live both near and far. Unlike other major cities that aggressively remove graffiti on sight and look to this particular medium as a crime and nothing more, Melbourne has embraced it to its fullest potential and encourages artists to showcase their work as much as possible.

THE TWELVE APOSTLES

This collection of stacked rocks can be found right off of the Great Ocean Road. Because of erosion, there are only eight of the natural structures left for 'curious tourists' eyes to see. Although it is not officially considered a Wonder of the World, it is still regarded almost if not equally as highly.





MARVEL
JESSICA
JONES

CARLOS CADORNIGA

Last May I wrote an article for the Press reacting to the trailer for the then upcoming CBS TV adaptation of DC Comics hero Supergirl. The eight minute preview didn't spell good things for the show, which looked to portray Kal-el's cousin Kara in what, I felt, was an incredibly stereotypical setting with the show basing its social values on a shallow and misinformed interpretation of feminism. I felt no better watching the actual pilot (totally legally on its premiere date in October and not by finding the episode when it leaked online about a week after the trailer dropped) as the show and its writing actively tried to pander to a feminist audience, only to fall flat on its face; the episode itself felt like a rushed and clichéd superhero origin film.

I've been meaning to watch a few more episodes just to see if the show could improve on its flimsy foundations, deliver a better show and provide the powerful female superhero that it's more than capable of showing us. To be honest, I've been too busy geeking out over the Netflix-exclusive Marvel hero that delivers the feminist punch that superhero entertainment media has sorely needed.

Of course, I'm talking about Jessica Jones.

Before I continue, I have to be honest: I hadn't heard of the character before the show actually came out; I knew about every single Marvel hero in the Netflix lineup except for her. Despite that, my attention was immediately drawn to the show by offering up a strong female superhero as a main protagonist in the vein of Buffy Summers

and Ripley of the Alien franchise. I immensely enjoyed getting to know Jessica as I watched and re-watched every binge-worthy episode it had to offer.

You may know the story by now: an alcoholic ex-superhero uses her powers in her work as a private detective to solve cases while trying to escape the mental and physical demons in her life. The show was not only incredibly engrossing and clever, but it also brought a refreshing depiction of female protagonists in a show that pulled no punches and approached poignant and sensitive subject matters with tacit and depth.

Each and every female character in the show is complex and fascinating in their own right. From the tough, jaded and damaged Jessica Jones to the determined Trish Walker, from Jessica's cold-hearted frenemy lawyer Jeri Hogarth to even Jessica's frustratingly nosy and creepy neighbor Robyn, the show is chock full of women with multifaceted personalities and compelling depth in their characters. While some are certainly more likeable than others, each character is perfect in their imperfections and bring about a level of representation rarely seen in the on-screen superhero genre.

The immensely sensitive topic of rape is handled on the show with incredible and necessary fashion. The main antagonist Kilgrave, a twisted sociopath with the uncanny ability to command anyone to do anything he wants, is also a rapist in his own right. Not only does he physically rape some his victims, Jessica included, but he goes on to violate their minds and forces them to do tasks that

they would never originally do as they helplessly obey his every word. As the show progresses and victims of Kilgrave begin emerging, the connection to rape is made all too apparent when said victims suffer trauma from his influence and the general public vilifies them, believing that the object of their torment couldn't possibly exist and that they're merely guilty parties trying to find excuses for the terrible things they were subject to do.

In an interview with New York Magazine, Jessica Jones star Krysten Ritter described show creator Melissa Rosenberg as "a feminist with a capital F," tackling rape and its surrounding controversy in her show with such bluntness in her story of a victim enduring and coping with the acts forced upon her.

I was excited enough to finally see a woman headlining a superhero show with both Supergirl and Jessica Jones. Looking back on the latter, I believe the CBS show had good intentions. For a network whose youngest audience demographic is likely the grandchildren who fall asleep when their grandparents flip on NCIS, I highly doubt modern-day feminism is their strong suit. That's why I'm glad that the Jessica Jones show exists. With compelling female characters and a complex story with just the right amount of grit, it brings us one step closer to a society that wouldn't think twice about on-screen ladies kicking some ass. Now if season 2 could come out already, that'd be great.



JAZZ KEEPS ON SWINGING

JORDAN BOWMAN

Ryan McNulty and the Black Tie Brass Band are tucked into a small corner inside the Astor Room, a small bar in Queens. The overhead light casted a shadow over McNulty's face as he blew into his trombone with his cheeks puffed. The sound of the brass instruments and piano melded together with the chatter of bar patrons and the clink of wine glasses.

McNulty is the founder, composer and arranger for Black Tie Brass, a jazz and funk septet from Long Island. He has been thinking about jazz and its influence on music culture over the last few days despite jazz music's low album sales.

Jazz album sales are tied for last with classical music for least popular genre with just 1.4 percent of total music consumption, according to the 2014 Nielsen Year End Report. The decline has shown no signs of improvement in the Nielsen Mid-Year report for 2015.

The lights began to fade out as McNulty snapped his fingers rhythmically on beat with the piano's jazz swing. The people around the bar and sitting at dinner tables applauded as the band closed out another jam. Ryan bowed his head smiling and then placed his trombone on a stand before flipping through a large black book of sheet music.

"The thing keeping the jazz scene thriving right now, almost regardless of album sales, is the evolution of the genre," McNulty said. "The scene is really thriving through that evolutionary process of moving from swing to maybe a Hip Hop and Funk oriented brand of jazz."

"The jazz community stays alive based on its utter indifference to album sales as an indication of its worth or direction," Tad Shull, program editor of Jazz Studies Online at Columbia University, said. Despite a decline in national popularity, jazz still manages



to have a thriving community across Long Island and New York.

Streaming music online has increased by 92 percent since 2014 with 135 billion streams throughout the first half of 2015. Streaming services have shifted the way music is heard, but jazz also continues to struggle in this new platform, ranking last with only 0.3 percent of streaming consumption in 2014.

"People enjoy listening to jazz live as opposed to just listening to an album. Clubs are still sold out for jazz musicians," David Schroeder, program director of New York University's Jazz Studies Program said. "Anywhere you go, jazz is still recognized as a pure art form."

As the musical landscape progresses and changes over time, so do certain genres, and jazz is no different.

"I don't think it's called jazz anymore," McNulty said. "There are influences of hip-hop and all these different factors. Jazz sales might be going down, but

the new kind of jazz, that evolution, is going up."

The decline of jazz could be due to a lack of exposure to a younger audience, Art Davis, an applied artist at Northern Illinois University School of Music, said.

"I fault the educational system," Davis said. "The greatest artistic contribution America has made to the world is barely mentioned in the schools, if at all."

"Jazz will survive in one way or another," Davis added. "The music is too great to forget."

What Happened to all the Rock Stars?

JESSICA VESTUTO

It was 2007. I sat in Mr. Hart's fifth grade class. We hadn't had lunch yet. Moods were slowly approaching the danger zone and attention spans were becoming hopeless. Fifth grade had asked a lot of me: a memorization of the state capitols, a basic understanding of photosynthesis and an ability to solve fractions without any visible shaking. Now fifth grade wanted even more. It wanted to know what I want to be when I grow up.

Couldn't I at least eat lunch first?

I settled on "cartoonist." I remember spelling it wrong on the sheet being passed around. My spelling was, and occasionally still is, alarmingly wrong for a person of my

"In fifth grade we were ready for lives reserved for the artistic, the athletic, the famous and the noble.

In our minds, the artist never starved, the athlete had no expiration date and the celebrity only obtained fame through talent."

age. My teacher clarified what it was I was trying to spell and fixed it, so it appears correctly on the "What I Want to be When I Grow Up" page in the yearbook. Cartoonist.

The only explanation I can offer for my choice is that I liked art class and was going through a Charles Schultz phase. I had a few collections of his comics and identified greatly with Snoopy's imaginative and hedonistic approach to life. So it was decided, I would be a cartoonist, the next Charles Schultz.

Looking at the yearbook page eight years later, I'm grateful that my classmates and I were able to write our prospective career in our own words rather than select



them from a list of titles. This process was how careers like "Lego Master" made the list. Our word choice told the spirit of our ambitions. We didn't want to be actors and musicians: we wanted to be movie stars and rock stars. Not pilots, but US Air Force pilots. Not horseback riders, but Olympic horseback riders. We didn't want safe, reliable nor the biggest return on investments. We would be whatever we wanted to be, and we certainly didn't need a reason.

1. Business Administration
2. General Psychology
3. Nursing
4. General Biology
5. Teacher Education and Professional Development
6. Criminal Justice
7. Accounting
8. Liberal Arts and Sciences
9. English Language and Literature
10. History

According to college.usatoday.com, these are the ten most popular college majors (I was surprised to see my oftenscoffed at major made the cut at #9). There is nothing wrong with the professions these majors yield—the world needs these professions. But still, as I look at this list, I can't help but wonder what happened to all the rock stars?

I don't remember when practicality and security somehow extinguished the

infantile fearlessness behind our fifth grade ambitions, only that it did. We entered middle school as Lego Masters and finished high school with far less exciting career prospects. If asked now, we'd have new answers for the *what do you want to be when you grow up* question. But this isn't the question being asked anymore. Now it's *What are you going to do with your degree when you graduate?* I know this well, as "What do you do with an English degree?" has become a collegiate cliché. The old question requires choosing a costume from the dress-up bin. The new question demands we stop playing and put on different, more serious attire.

Of course, I wouldn't want my ten-year-old self to choose my profession, and I'm sure my former classmates would agree. Our views have broadened. Insight has developed. Our ambitions should change as we acquire more knowledge, but this doesn't mean the force behind our ambitions has to change as well. In fifth grade we were ready for lives reserved for the artistic, the athletic, the famous and the noble. In our minds, the artist never starved, the athlete had no expiration date and the celebrity only obtained fame through talent. To maintain this spirit seems nearly impossible, but maybe, if we're lucky, we can somehow hold onto a piece of it.





Islanders Move to Brooklyn, Struggle to Find Success

Image courtesy of CBS New York

MICHAEL DESANTIS

More than halfway into the 2015-16 NHL season, it's safe to say that the New York Islanders' first season in Brooklyn hasn't gone as hoped. It's certainly not because of how the team has played, for the standings indicate the Islanders are one of the best teams in the Eastern Conference.

Rather, the disappointment is the paltry attendance of Islander games at the Barclays Center. The games at the Barclays Center are averaging only 12,923 fans per event as of Jan. 2, according to the NHL Attendance Report on ESPN, which is second to dead last in the league.

The Islanders relocated from the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum to the Barclays Center following the team's first round playoff loss to the Washington Capitals at the end of the 2014-15 season.

Charles Wang, the owner of the Islanders, hoped to renovate Nassau Coliseum and the surrounding area with an initiative called the Lighthouse Project, which failed when it was shot down by the county's politics.

Wang opted to keep the team in New York as opposed to other potential landing spots such as Kansas City and Quebec. The result was the team's not-so-smooth transition to Brooklyn.

Upon landing the team, CEO of the Barclays Center Brett Yormark wanted to make some adjustments to the

Islanders to brand them as Brooklyn's hockey team.

One of the first changes Yormark hoped to make was create a new goal horn for the team by working with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The new horn was met with outraged Islander fans who wanted nothing to do with it and petitioned that the horn that was used for countless games at Nassau Coliseum be brought back. Yormark gave in to the demands of the fans and brought the beloved goal horn back before the start of the regular season.

Yormark also unveiled a new black and white third jersey for the Islanders, replacing the team's popular alternate blue sweaters. Fans were not happy with the design of the jersey, feeling that Yormark was trying to brand the Islanders into the Brooklyn Nets, the basketball team sharing the Barclays Center with the Isles.

Yormark defended his marketing decision for the black and white jerseys on the Michael Kay Show by saying that he was trying to reach out to the Brooklyn-ites and grow the fanbase by creating a jersey that represented the borough's colors. That's all well and good, except for one detail: black and white are not the colors of Brooklyn. Blue and gold are.

There is also a problem with the Barclays Center when it comes to

hockey games: the view from a section of the seats is obstructed, a nonexistent issue for the Nets basketball games. The view that fans are missing is of one of the nets, which severely impacts the viewing pleasure for fans stuck with the limited view seats.

On the flipside though, the team still goes by the "New York" Islanders and use blue and orange as its primary colors. Not that there would ever be any need for the team to become the Brooklyn Islanders, given that Brooklyn is a part of New York.

If Yormark ever wanted to change the team's name or colors, he would likely encounter a fierce resistance by passionate Islander fans. After all, it's a storied franchise with four Stanley Cups and a history embedded on Long Island.

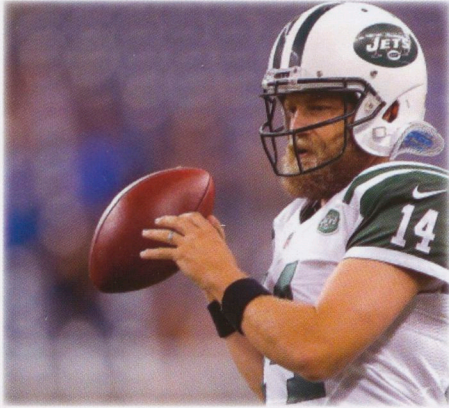
Reaching out to a new fanbase hasn't worked in Yormark's favor yet, as evidenced by the attendance statistics. It's not the product on the ice. The team is winning and is led by its captain John Tavares, an NHL superstar. Perhaps Brooklyn is more of a basketball town and not the hockey town that Yormark anticipated, or a train ride into Brooklyn is too much for Long Islanders during a busy year.

Meanwhile the Islanders will hope to keep winning and subsequently put more fans in the seats of the Barclays Center.

NEW YORK JETS



2015-16 SEASON RECAP



MICHAEL DESANTIS

The New York Jets (10-6) had a good season but not good enough. The team fell one victory shy of clinching a playoff berth when it lost to the Buffalo Bills (8-8) in Week 17 by a 22-17 score.

There were a few glaring factors that led to the Jets' defeat at the hands of former-Jets head coach Rex Ryan and his Bills squad. Jets star cornerback Darrelle Revis was burned several times by Buffalo wide receiver Sammy Watkins. The head coach of the Jets, Todd Bowles, was stingy in handing the ball to running back Chris Ivory.

Perhaps the biggest reason for the loss was Jets quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick. Until the final game, Fitzpatrick had been having a rejuvenating year in his first season with New York. This season, Fitzpatrick completed 335 passes for 3,905 yards with 31 touchdowns and only 15 interceptions. However, three of those interceptions came at the worst time possible; the fourth quarter of the must-win final game of the season. One of those interceptions came when the Jets were driving for a touchdown and Fitzpatrick was picked off at the goal line.

The Pittsburgh Steelers (10-6) were able to fend off the Cleveland Browns (3-13) by a final score of 28-12 and snatch the last playoff seed from the

Jets. If New York had beat Buffalo, Pittsburgh's victory wouldn't have mattered and it would've been the Jets celebrating life in the postseason.

Instead, the Jets need to begin preparations for next year. Despite the disappointment of not making the postseason, the Jets still exceeded the expectations of the general public. Fitzpatrick came in and played well until Week 17.

Wide receiver Brandon Marshall may have been the biggest steal when the Jets traded for him before the season for just a fifth-round pick in the draft. He caught 109 passes for 1,502 yards and 14 touchdowns in his first season with the Jets.

Eric Decker, another wide receiver, also had another successful year with

solidified himself as the Jets premier running back.

As a whole, the team came in second place in the AFC East division, accumulating 387 points scored throughout the season and allowed 314.

While an otherwise good season was tarnished by a poor showing against the Bills, it never should have come down to the last game if the Jets didn't battle some early season consistency issues. The team started out 4-1, but then hit a rough 1-4 skid before finding its groove for a five-game winning streak. The Jets lost home games they should have won, such as the 24-17 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles (7-9) and another 22-17 loss to the Bills.

The story of the season seems to be the Jets overachieved but just fell short of a playoff spot due to dropping a game here and there they should have emerged from victorious. Next season, the Jets will

"THE STORY OF THE SEASON SEEMS TO BE THE JETS OVERACHIEVED BUT JUST FELL SHORT OF A PLAYOFF SPOT DUE TO DROPPING A GAME HERE AND THERE THEY SHOULD HAVE EMERGED FROM VICTORIOUS."

the Jets, catching 80 passes for 1,027 yards and 12 touchdowns.

Ivory rushed 243 times for 1,070 yards and seven touchdowns and

look to build upon the success they found for most of the 2015-16 season and win the games they need to for their shot at Super Bowl glory.





The Best 6-10 Team of All Time



Image courtesy of The Associated Press

NIKOLAS DONADIC

Giants. The New York Giants could have done their name justice if only they weren't the typical Giants. They finished the 2015 regular season at a whopping 6-10. Nothing astonishing for a team who found themselves battling injuries and countless mental gaffes.

No matter what the standings say, these 6-10 Giants were not the average sub-.500 squad. In fact, they lost eight of those ten games by seven points or less. These monumental failures included taking the New England Patriots and Carolina Panthers down to the end of the fourth quarter before losing on late field goals. Both teams entered those games undefeated, at 8-0 and 13-0 respectively.

The constant almost-victories didn't afford Giants head coach Tom Coughlin anymore cache, which led to his inevitable resignation. Coughlin was responsible for a few of those losses, but the team let him down more than vice versa. The two-time Super Bowl champion left a group of proud men in emotional shambles with his announcement. The oft stoic Eli Manning was lost, visibly fighting back tears, as the man who has perpetually been by his side and protected him fell on his own sword.

The season was a failure for the Giants, since anything but a championship is a failure for a team in the New York market, but the year was not a complete wash. The aforementioned Manning had a second consecutive great season as quarterback, under the national radar. He ended the season with 35 touchdowns and 14

interceptions. This is a far cry from the 27 interception season two years ago which ultimately led to former offensive coordinator Kevin Gilbride's departure.

Wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. had a fantastic sophomore season. However, his play was overshadowed by a late season altercation with Panthers cornerback Josh Norman. The at times diva, at times savvy veteran stole the show when the Giants took on the Carolina Panthers. OBJ beat Norman deep a mere three plays into the game, and almost altered the game and the Giants season drastically, but sadly he dropped the pass and the rest was history. Beckham, likely more frustrated at himself than Norman, proceeded to engage in a seemingly endless back and forth with Norman. This included trash talking, hits and tackles away from plays, personal foul penalties, and warnings to each coach from the refs. The ending epitomized this season for the Giants: They came back from a 35-7 deficit to tie the game, with Beckham scoring the game tying touchdown over Norman on a late fourth down, and Panthers quarterback Cam Newton promptly proceeded to walk down the field and win the Panthers the game by setting up a Carolina field goal.

Beckham was suspended for the Giants Week 16 game against Minnesota, which was meaningless before kickoff as the Giants had been eliminated from the postseason, and had his character openly questioned by the mass media. He went from golden boy to pariah in a matter of

days. This was probably necessary in the long run, in order to prevent the kid from letting everything go to his head. For the record, he is 23 years old; the kid is just that, a kid. Anyone else would have gotten a break, but a superstar in New York on that stage didn't and never will.

The G-Men's offense was eighth in yardage and sixth in scoring this season. The defense on the other hand ranked 30th in points allowed and was last in the league in yards allowed. Manning's revitalized success, coupled with Odell Beckham Jr.'s continued spectacular play, and the overall improvement of the Giants offense has left former Giants offensive coordinator Ben McAdoo the Giants new head coach. Although that great offense, which didn't run the ball as much as they could and should have, coupled with a defense which was statistically atrocious, will leave you at 6-10. If the New York Giants would have won half of the games they lost by one score, they would have been the division champions. But alas they did not win those games, and it left Coughlin out of luck and unwilling to make excuses.

The Giants are poised, with a few offseason acquisitions and a good head coaching hire, to be a contender in 2016. They could not maintain their every four year magic to get Coughlin another few seasons, but that is likely for the best. A change in shot caller will likely help the team "get up" for every game, not just big games. A different head coach and a culture change could very well lead this team into the postseason and beyond.

Whales are the Salmon of the Stream

KRISTOFER IAN BARR

“Consider class, ladies, men, gentle or otherwise, that what we have here is a microcosm of certain world-wide events,” said the Teacher, his arms empty, without much use, hanging limply at his sides.

Tripped into unknown, albeit garden variety, I’ve seen that everyday woodlands, the class of small school-children made their way next to a shallow stream. Its waters did not so much lap on their banks as they did sludgily glide across a black rocky bottom. Crickets chirped hornily. Small furry animals cooed out of sight. Trees loomed overhead, yet never too much as if they were embarrassed to do so.

The Teacher, dressed in khakis and a workaday cotton button-down shirt, wrung his hands at his sides and thought of something to say.

“Yes, um,” he muttered. “Err, take for instance this stream, right here.” He pointed to the stream. “It’s, well, um, think about it.” He crossed to the stream, knelt down next to it in the mud. Urgently he waved his hand, inviting his class closer, most of whom stayed back, talking in exasperated tones amongst themselves. A few did, however, reluctantly, edge closer.

“You see,” said the Teacher, “we have in this very stream, an entire ecosystem at play. Beings are born, fight, die, and are born again in streams just like these.” The Teacher took out a pen and began swirling the water. “Now,” he said to the few pedestrians gathered in front of him, “gaze upon the murky depths. Look unto the blazing firestorm of living beings interacting. Who here among you can tell me what kind of beings these creatures are, right...” he pointed to a small creature, braving the stream’s unmighty current to swim upstream, “here.”

Noses were picked; thumbs were twiddled. At last, after centuries long silence, a small girl, smaller than the rest of the young class, daunted though she was at the obvious question, raised her hand but ever so slightly.

Alight with fierce pride for his young flock’s infinite ability to surprise him with their idiot’s unknowledge, the teacher pointed his pen at the girl at the back. “Yes, you.”

“Umm,” said the girl, “I think... I think those are whales, Mr. Teacher.”

“Whales?” said the Teacher. “Whales!” nearly yelled the Teacher.

“Quite right,” said the Teacher.

Under the surface of the stream, tiny, long bodied whales skimmed its unhidden depths. Whales upon whales upon whales. They bounded across currents and eddies upstream, passing over and under one another. What looked like smiles creased their tiny faces. Playfully, one after another, the whales breached the surface of the stream. Minute jets of water sprayed out of their dorsal holes, projecting in wide arcs and falling back into the stream.

“Good, very good,” said the Teacher. “Now, who here has tried whale?”

A few among the class who were listening half-heartedly raised their hands.

“The meat, as so few of you know, is quite blubbery,” said the Teacher. “Rather oily too, matter of fact. But whale oil has additional purposes. A fact: Whale oil was once known by another name – “train oil” which comes from the Dutch word, “traan,” meaning “tear” or “drop.” It is used in the transmission fluid of automobiles, but it’s also used in the production of soap. I’m rather fond of my whale soap.”

The Teacher began prodding the stream with his pen. “As I can see you are all enraptured by this wonderful field trip and in the knowledge I impart unto you all, Let’s see a show of hands. Who, among you, know what, in the end, this entire ecosystem means to the rest of the whole wide world. This stream is its own small world, but in the end, what does it really mean.”

The class again was silent for a long time. Flies and bees and mosquitoes and all kinds of tiny things buzzed around the children’s heads, buzzing and buzzing loudly to fill up the gap of silence left by the question.

It was the small girl again who spoke up, shyly raising her hand.

“Oh yes, you beautiful creature, you, yes, erm...” The Teacher tapped his foot. “Whoever you are, yes, please speak.”

The girl looked at her feet and kicked the ground there. “Well, Mr. Teacher, it means nothing. None of it means anything at all.”

“Right you are, my dear,” the Teacher chirped. His pen flashed out suddenly, inhumanly fast and speared a breaching whale in its dorsal hole.

Emerging from the surf the whale struggled against the undaunted pull of the pen, flapping hither and to, desperate and still, forever smiling.

With one of their brethren gone, the rest of the whales, swimming still forever upstream with unanimous clarity, raised a song in desperation. It was a low note filled with sorrow and pain. Though somewhat swallowed by the water, but the class heard it all the same.

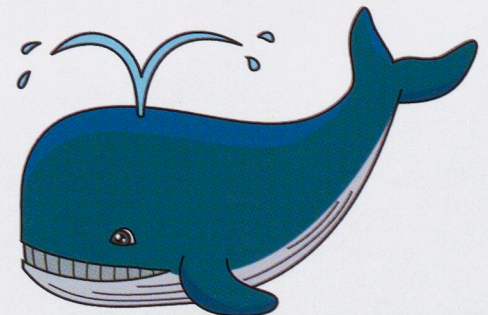
Still spearing the tiny whale, the Teacher stood up and faced the class. “Nihilism, my pupils,” he spoke softly, “is the understanding that nothing matters. This whale here does not matter, for there are so many of them, swimming in their little ecosystems all across North American and beyond. What is one among so many?”

Slowly the Teacher raised the whale to his lips, which opened, wrapped themselves around the belly of the whale and ponderously drew inwards for a large bite of the still struggling creature.

The teacher chewed and chewed. Droplets of blood and oil ran down his lips and onto his white shirt. The whale, unable to do much else, struggled and smiled. The teacher, bowing in front of his class, smiled also.

Rills of bright clear water too flowed off the sides of the whale. If one of the small children in the class were to look closely enough, though none dared, they would have found, swimming in running water off the whales back, uncountable tiny whales, tinier than the one dying at the end of the Teacher’s pen. These whales, though pulled by the inexorable force of gravity, swam forever upwards against the current, futile as that was.

Beaded droplets fell from the struggling form of the whale and inside those droplets the tiny, tiny whales swam around and around, looking for a way out until the ground overtook them, shattering on the mud below.



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